1486. b. 55.

ZELUCO.

VARIOUS VIEWS

OF

HUMAN NATURE,

TAKEN

From LIFE and MANNERS,
Foreign and Domeſtic.

——— Cur tamen hos tu
Evaſiſſe putes, quod diri conſcia facti
Mens habet attonitos, et ſurdo verbere cædit,
Occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum?
Pœna autem vehemens, ac multo ſævior illis,
Quas et Cæditius gravis invenit aut Rhadamanthus,
Nocte dieque ſuum geſtare in pectore teſtem. Juv.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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AUG

ZELUCO.

CHAP. LI.

Les Paſſions le plus violentes nous laiſſent quelquefois du relâche : mais la vanité nous agite toujours.

ROCHEFOUCAULT.

ZELUCO, who was of a moſt ſuſpicious temper, now imagined that Father Pedro acted in concert with Madame de Seidlits, and that the deſperate ſtate of her affairs had produced an alteration in the ſentiments of her daughter, of which they had informed him, that he might puſh a renewal of the propoſal of marriage without delay.—He thought alſo that the Monk's zeal had made him overſhoot his commiſſion, by imprudently mentioning the circumſtance of the ſale of the

jewels; for he was convinced, that one reaſon for their wiſhing to have the ceremony ſpeedily concluded, was to prevent *this* and other proofs of their poverty from appearing. As he now believed, therefore, that it was in his power to obtain Laura in marriage whenever he pleaſed, that very conviction acting on his capricious and vicious diſpoſition, diſinclined him to it, and determined him to renew his original ſcheme of ſeduction, which he flattered himſelf the diſtreſſes of poverty, joined to the credit of his late exploit, would greatly facilitate.

Laura, though unacquainted with the diſagreeable accounts which her mother had received from Germany, or with the exact ſtate of the circumſtances in which ſhe had been left by her father, knew in general that they were narrow, and therefore would have been pleaſed with a more ſevere ſyſtem of œconomy than was agreeable to her mother. A knowledge of this was one reaſon why Madame de Seidlits had always repreſented their ſituation in the moſt favourable light to her daughter.

This

This young lady, notwithſtanding the admiration ſhe never failed to excite, was by no means fond of appearing often in public. For what are called public amuſements, ſhe had but a very moderate reliſh; and ſtood in no need of them as a reſource for paſſing her time.

She had ſuch a taſte for reading, as afforded a very pleaſing ſource of entertainment and improvement to her mind, without inclining her to deſpiſe or neglect other occupations becoming her age and ſex. Her natural good ſenſe, taſte, and accompliſhments, while they rendered her independent of company, made her more entertaining in it: without being over-reſerved, nothing could be more modeſt than her deportment; and very few women poſſeſſed the talent of converſing in a more eaſy and agreeable manner. Her mind being undiſturbed by paſſion, ſerene through innocence, naturally cheerful, and eaſily amuſed, ſhe could have lived happy in a very limited ſociety, and in the delightful

occupation of promoting her mother's happineſs, and that of all around her.

Madame de Seidlits was ſomewhat of a different character: although Laura was the warmeſt object of her affection, yet ſhe ſtood in need of amuſements, and had a taſte for a greater ſhare of elegant ſuperfluities than her revenue could ſupply. Had ſhe conformed herſelf exactly to her daughter's taſte, they could have lived free from debt upon the penſion and intereſt of the money left by her huſband; but as ſhe often followed her own, they muſt have been embarraſſed in a ſhort time, even although their banker's failure had not happened.

The particular article of expence which gave Laura moſt uneaſineſs, was what regarded her dreſs. Her own taſte in dreſs was elegantly ſimple, and, in her, was ſo becoming, that all who beheld her, were of opinion that additional ornament would tend to diminiſh the luſtre of her beauty: yet when in compliance with her mother's

taſte ſhe adopted ornaments to the height of the mode, the ſame beauty ſhone conſpicuous through all the variations, and in ſpite of the extravagances of faſhion.

While Madame de Seidlits endeavoured to aſſume the appearance of ſerenity and cheerfulneſs before Laura, ſhe could not reſiſt a real depreſſion of ſpirits. She ſaw the neceſſity of narrowing the limited plan of expence ſhe had with difficulty hitherto followed, and was uncertain whether any ſyſtem of œconomy would relieve her from a ſpecies of diſtreſs which her ſpirit could ill ſupport, and which ſhe felt with keener anguiſh on Laura's account—who in reality could have ſupported the misfortune which was ſo carefully concealed from her infinitely better than her mother.

Meanwhile, Zeluco viſited Madame de Seidlits with moſt aſſiduous punctuality, and was always received with a cordial welcome. He ſaw the dejection of Madame de Seidlits, and the anxiety of Laura, with ſecret ſatisfaction and apparent concern; he imputed both to the diſtreſs of their

circumſtances, and was in daily expectation that Madame de Seidlits would apply to him for relief, which he imagined would entitle him to ſtill greater familiarity in the family, involve her in repeated obligations to himſelf, and finally terminate in the ſucceſs of his baſe deſigns upon the honour of Laura.

Zeluco's paſſion was of the groſſeſt nature; he called it love, but with more propriety, even at its height, it might have been denominated hatred; it was entirely ſelfiſh, unconnected with ſentiment, or the happineſs of its object; even in the midſt of deſire, he felt reſentment againſt Laura, for the neglect and indifference which ſhe had evinced towards him.

He took every opportunity, when he found Madame de Seidlits alone, of inſinuating a deſire of obliging her, and lamented, with mildneſs and much reſpect, that ſhe was ſo reſerved, and ſeemed unwilling even in the ſmalleſt inſtance to give him the pleaſure of being of ſervice to her.

He ſometimes, on Madame de Seidlits being called out, was left for a few minutes

with

with Laura; to her he expreſſed the moſt tender concern for her mother's health, "which he dreaded was not ſo good as uſual; was afraid of ſome concealed anguiſh either in her body or mind, and with the moſt inſinuating ſolicitude begged to know whether Laura ſuſpected what it was; not that he preſumed to make too particular an inquiry, only in general, whether ſhe did not ſuſpect that her mother had ſome ſecret affliction, and whether it was bodily or mental."

Laura's anſwers on all ſuch occaſions imported, "that ſhe hoped he was miſtaken in imagining that any thing particular diſturbed her mother; but even if it were ſo, ſhe ſhould be cautious of prying into what her parent judged proper to conceal."

In the mean while, Madame de Seidlits flattered herſelf that Laura began to view Zeluco with more favourable eyes than formerly, and entertained hopes that ſhe would at length conſent to his propoſals: ſhe was determined however to leave her to herſelf, and adhere to the promiſe ſhe had

had given, never to ſolicit her on the ſubject. But ſhe found means, without apparent deſign, of leaving them together frequently, for a conſiderable ſpace of time, in the expectation that he would gradually ſtrengthen Laura's diſpoſition in his favour, and ſeize ſome happy occaſion of renewing his ſuit, for the ſucceſs of which ſhe was more anxious than ever.

The idea that Laura, whom ſhe juſtly thought formed for adding luſtre to the higheſt and moſt brilliant rank of life, ſhould undergo the mortifications of poverty, was what ſhe could bear with leſs firmneſs, than the thought, horrid as it was, of mortifications of the ſame nature occurring to herſelf. Here Madame de Seidlits fell into a very general error, and to which parents are peculiarly liable, in the eſtabliſhing of their children in marriage. Her daughter's happineſs, not her own, was what ſhe had chiefly in view; but in eſtimating this, her own ideas of happineſs, not her daughter's, were what ſhe chiefly conſidered.

Laura

Laura had remarked ſome appearance of dejection in her mother's ſpirits, before it was hinted to her by Zeluco; but had not made any inquiry about the cauſe, partly becauſe ſhe hoped it proceeded from no cauſe of importance, and partly for the reaſon ſhe had given to Zeluco.

She had remarked that her mother had leſs dejection in Zeluco's company than when he was not preſent; on this account ſhe herſelf was pleaſed with his viſits; ſhe thought herſelf under great obligations to him, and in conſequence of theſe ſentiments, the whole of her conduct was ſo much altered, that he became perſuaded not only that her former prejudices were overcome, but that ſhe had conceived a great partiality for him. He was much leſs ſurpriſed at this, than he had been formerly at her having viewed him with indifference; which his vanity never permitted him to think was natural, but rather the artificial offſpring of Signora Sporza's malice. But ſhe being now at a diſtance, he fondly believed that his perſonal accompliſhments began to operate

operate the ſame effect on the heart of Laura, which, in his opinion, they uſually did on the hearts of women of ſenſibility and diſcernment.

Madame de Seidlits had for ſome time expected letters from a friend at Berlin, who had engaged to write to her the real ſtate of her banker's affairs, and how much he would be able to pay his creditors, as ſoon as the truſtees appointed for that buſineſs ſhould make their report. Several poſts had already arrived ſince the time when ſhe expected this account, without her having received any letter on a ſubject which intereſted her ſo much. She was ſitting one day with Laura, when the ſervant returned from the poſt-office, and told her there were no foreign letters for her. She could not help diſcovering marks of diſappointment and vexation.—"I am ſure, my dear mother," ſaid Laura, "will let me know, as ſoon as it is fit I ſhould know, what it is which gives her uneaſineſs."—"Being diſappointed when I am in expectation of letters from my diſtant friends

friends always vexes me, my dear," ſaid Madame de Seidlits: "I cannot help it."

"I hope you will have agreeable accounts ſoon," ſaid Laura.

"I hope I ſhall, my dear," replied Madame de Seidlits, with a ſigh; and directly fell into a fit of muſing, which brought tears into the eyes of Laura, who turned to the window, that they might not be obſerved by her mother.

Zeluco was introduced.—The face of Madame de Seidlits brightened, and ſhe received him with cheerfulneſs and every mark of regard. The heart of Laura, who perceived the immediate effect his preſence had on her mother, throbbed with warmer gratitude and good-will towards him, than even when he delivered her from the ſuppoſed robbers.

A female acquaintance of Madame de Seidlits at this inſtant called on her.

"You are low-ſpirited of late," ſaid ſhe to Madame de Seidlits, "and keep the houſe too much? I am come to carry you into the freſh air for a couple of hours."

"I beg

"I beg you will go," ſaid Laura eagerly to her mother; "you really have been too much confined."

"I will with pleaſure, my dear," ſaid Madame de Seidlits.—"You will entertain Signor Zeluco, while he chuſes to ſtay."

CHAP. LII.

Reſerve with frankneſs, art with truth ally'd,
Courage with ſoftneſs, modeſty with pride. POPE.

WHEN Madame de Seidlits and her friend had driven away, Laura aſked Zeluco, whether he choſe to hear an air on the harpſichord? He anſwered, he ſhould prefer it to any concert, provided ſhe would accompany it with her voice.

She played and ſung a lively air. This did not exactly ſuit Zeluco, who wiſhed to make ſerious and very pathetic love to her; he could not avoid, however, praiſing the tune, and the execution.

"Since that air is to your taſte, Signor, ſaid Laura, who was highly pleaſed with him on account of the good effect his viſit produced on her mother, "I will play another in the ſame ſtyle."

"You

"You play like an angel—and are an ange l," cr ied Zeluco.

"Do angels deal in muſic of this ſort?" ſaid Laura, running over the keys with infinite rapidity, and ſinging a very gay air.

Zeluco being perſuaded that he had been left by the mother to give him an opportunity of renewing his propoſal to the daughter, and that ſhe herſelf had, for ſome time, expected this with impatience; he conſtrued her gaiety into a deſire of captivating him, and meditated how to addreſs her in terms expreſſive of love, without conveying any idea of matrimony. He dreaded any hint of that kind, and imputed her frank and obliging behaviour to a diſpoſition in Laura, of which he determined to take the advantage.

Having finiſhed the air, and perceiving that Zeluco was grave and penſive; ſhe ſaid, with a ſweetneſs of voice and manner which would have turned a leſs determined villain from his purpoſe, "You do not ſeem to reliſh this ſo much, Signor?"

"I re-

"I reliſh," cried he, "every thing you do, and every thing you ſay; and beg to be heard on a ſubject of infinite importance to my happineſs."

"You have a right, Signor, to expect to be heard by me on any ſubject which you yourſelf have not agreed to avoid," ſaid Laura, with a ſolemn and ſerious air, which the impaſſioned manner in which he had ſpoken obliged her to aſſume.

Although Zeluco was a little ſurpriſed at the ſudden alteration which had taken place in the features of Laura, he reſumed his rapturous tone: "How can I avoid expreſſing my admiration of beauty ſo angelic?" cried he, throwing himſelf on his knee, and attempting to ſeize her hand.

"Whatever you have to ſay, Signor," ſaid Laura, withdrawing her hand, and ſpeaking with firmneſs and dignity, "you will certainly ſpeak more at your own eaſe, and to my ſatisfaction, by keeping your ſeat."

"Hear me, Madam," ſaid Zeluco, embarraſſed and overawed.

"I will hear nothing," replied ſhe, "while you continue in that poſture;—it is too ridiculous."

Zeluco roſe.—"Now, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "what have you to ſay?"

"I am much concerned, Madam," reſumed he, heſitating, and entirely driven from his purpoſe; "I am ſorry, I ſay, that I have offended you;—but I really flattered myſelf, that after the marks of regard which I had the good fortune to—but thoſe are trifles—My eſteem and regard are unbounded,—and the honour I propoſed,—that is, the happineſs of calling you mine—My fortune, my life, I conſider as nothing—that is, I mean, when put in competition."—In this incoherent manner he went on, without knowing what he ſaid.

There is a dignity and elevation in virtue which overawes the moſt daring profligate. No man of ſenſe, however free in his morals, ever attempted a woman till he imagined that ſhe had ſome inclination he ſhould. Let him uſe what delicate terms he pleaſes, to what purpoſe can he be

be ſuppoſed to expreſs his own wiſhes, if he does not ſuſpect that ſhe has the ſame wiſhes with himſelf? This is the true point of view in which women ought to conſider addreſſes of this nature—In what other point of view can they be conſidered? A woman is ſolicited to grant what diſhonours herſelf. Well, her ſolicitor, if he is not a fool, will not, in conſcience, expect that ſhe will ſtoop to this without a motive, or merely to pleaſe him. What then does he expect? Why, that ſhe will conſent to pleaſe herſelf.

The coolneſs and modeſt dignity of Laura's manner gave at once ſuch a check to Zeluco, that ſhe did not diſcover his aim. She ſaw only his embarraſſment, which ſhe imputed to his being conſcious of having broken the engagement which he had entered into, not to renew his propoſal of marriage; for, although ſhe had been ſurpriſed, and diſpleaſed with the manner in which he had addreſſed her, yet ſhe never once ſuſpected his real ſcheme.

Willing, therefore, to relieve his confuſion, and to be quite certain of what he meant; ſhe, with a milder aſpect, addreſſed him in theſe words: "Signor Zeluco, I wiſh to know whether I am to conſtrue what you ſay into a renewal of your former propoſal?"—Although conſcious that ſhe miſtook his intention, he anſwered her queſtion by a bow.—"Then," reſumed ſhe, "I muſt repeat what I formerly declared on that occaſion. I am truly ſenſible of the honour which your opinion does me. I ſhould be happy to have any proper opportunity of ſhewing the ſenſe of obligation which I have for the generous ſervices which you rendered me. You are entitled to my laſting gratitude—more is not in my power to beſtow;—and gratitude alone would, in a wife, be a poor return for the generous love you profeſs. After this avowal, and declaring with the ſame breath," continued ſhe, "that the propoſals you made, in point of liberality, exceed my utmoſt wiſh, it is evident, that my reaſon for declining them

is

is of a nature not to be overcome, and ought, therefore, to be an obſtacle of as great weight with you as it is with me. Indeed, if I had not been perſuaded that it had at length appeared ſo in your eyes, I ſhould have taken care to avoid any occaſion for an explanation, equally diſagreeable for you to hear, and me to repeat."

Having ſaid this, ſhe withdrew to another room, and left Zeluco ſo much ſurpriſed and confounded, that he remained fixed to the ſpot for ſome minutes before he recovered preſence of mind ſufficient to return to his own houſe.

He was now convinced, that all his conjectures were erroneous, and that, notwithſtanding domeſtic diſtreſſes, ſo far from having any deſign upon him, Laura was determined never to accept of him as a huſband. He had not pondered long on this, till, in proportion as his fears of loſing her augmented, his deſire to marry her increaſed, and before the enſuing morning he would have purchaſed at the

higheſt price that very ſituation which, the day before, he dreaded being drawn into, and had determined to uſe all his addreſs to avoid.

He plainly perceived, that her reaſon for refuſing him proceeded from diſlike; but although this conviction rankled in his breaſt with the ſevereſt anguiſh, he could not refuſe his admiration of the delicacy and propriety of her ſentiments, the candour and dignity with which they were expreſſed; while the beauty and elegance of her face and perſon never had appeared more attractive.

CHAP. LIII.

Nunc animum pietas, maternaque nomina frangunt.
OVID.

HE now regretted the language he had held to Father Pedro, and reſolved to renew his confederacy with him on the baſis on which it had formerly ſtood, reſolving, at the ſame time, that in one ſhape or other ſhe ſhould be *his*, whatever danger or guilt might attend the accompliſhment of his deſires.

Ever ſince their laſt converſation, Father Pedro had kept a watchful eye upon Zeluco, being ſuſpicious that he meditated ſome deſign upon Laura which he durſt not avow. Theſe ſuſpicions he intended to communicate to Madame de Seidlits, but he was prevented by Zeluco's intreating him to renew the matrimonial treaty. He endeavoured to give ſome plauſible

reaſon for his former behaviour, and Pedro was too well pleaſed with his preſent diſpoſition to criticiſe with much ſeverity his late conduct. But he was ſincerely ſorry that Laura ſeemed ſo determined to reject a meaſure which, in his eyes, appeared abſolutely neceſſary in the preſent ſtate of her mother's circumſtances.

He again ſpoke to Madame de Seidlits on the ſubject of Zeluco's addreſſes to Laura, enumerating the advantages that would reſult to herſelf, as well as to her daughter, from this alliance.

Madame de Seidlits thanked him for the intereſt he ſeemed to take in her family, adding, "That perhaps ſhe ſaw the advantages of ſuch an alliance in the ſame light that *he* did, and had ſtronger reaſons than he was acquainted with, for wiſhing that Laura were of the ſame way of thinking. But having the moſt complete conviction of the good ſenſe, virtuous inclinations, and dutiful diſpoſition of her daughter, to whom her approbation of Zeluco was perfectly known; ſhe was reſolved to adhere

adhere to her engagement, not to preſs her farther on that ſubject. There never was one human creature, Father," continued ſhe, " who had a ſtronger deſire to oblige another, than Laura has to oblige me; ſhe knows that few things could give me ſo much pleaſure as her conſenting to marry him; yet ſhe continues to reject him. What can this proceed from but a rooted diſlike? Whether this be well or ill founded, it would equally render her miſerable to be united to a perſon ſhe ſo diſlikes; and it would be the height of cruelty in me to exert maternal influence in ſuch a cauſe."

Father Pedro ſaid, " He feared that Laura ſacrificed her happineſs to an ill-grounded prejudice."

" She ſhall, at leaſt, not ſacrifice it to my importunity," replied Madame de Seidlits.

The efforts which Madame de Seidlits was obliged to make, to conceal the bad ſtate of her affairs from Laura, to appear cheerful while in reality ſhe was ſad, and to adhere to her promiſe and reſolution of

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giving no hint to her daughter in favour of Zeluco, hurt her health; ſhe loſt her appetite, grew thin, and uncommonly pale: when any body took notice of this, by an affected cheerfulneſs, and by aſſertions which her whole appearance contradicted, ſhe rendered her illneſs more viſible and more affecting.

"Alas! Madam," ſaid Laura, "why will you conceal the cauſe of your illneſs?"

"I am not ill," replied ſhe, with a ſickly ſmile.

"Let this be decided," ſaid Laura, "by a phyſician."

"Indeed, my dear, a phyſician could be of no ſervice to me."

"I am certain you are not well—you are always ſorrowful."

"Can phyſicians cure ſorrow?"

"You have then ſome ſecret ſorrow," cried Laura, catching at her mother's laſt expreſſion, as if it had been an avowal—"Tell me—O tell me the cauſe of your affliction;—confide in me;—truſt your Laura."

" I do confide in you, my beloved girl; —I could truſt my ſoul with you;—but you alarm yourſelf without a cauſe.—I am happy, my love, in your affection and goodneſs."

Laura could not refrain from tears at theſe expreſſions of her mother, but finding that ſhe declined to acknowledge the cauſe of her uneaſineſs, ſhe preſſed her no farther: perceiving, however, that her mother's dejection of ſpirits continued, and that ſhe became more and more emaciated, the young lady was at laſt ſo greatly alarmed, that ſhe communicated her fears to Father Pedro, intreating his counſel.

Hitherto he had abſtained from the ſubject, in expectation that Laura would adopt this very meaſure.

" I have been as uneaſy as you can be, my dear daughter, at the viſible alteration in your mother's ſpirits and health; and obſerving that ſhe avoided giving any reaſon for it, I could not help endeavouring, by every means I could think of, to diſcover whether ſhe had received any news

to diſturb her, or what the cauſe of ſuch dejection could be, that every poſſible method might be tried for its removal."

"And have you diſcovered the cauſe?" cried Laura, impatiently.

Father Pedro had heard of the failure of the banker; he began by informing her of what he had learned on that head.

Laura was in ſome degree relieved by this account; her imagination had figured ſomething worſe: ſhe dreaded that ſome diſeaſe of an incurable nature afflicted her mother, which, out of tenderneſs to her daughter, ſhe concealed.

"The diſtreſs which this man's misfortune brings will be temporary," ſaid ſhe; "he will ſurely pay ſome proportion, if not the whole, of his debts. My mother feels the preſent inconveniency more on my account than her own. I will ſhew her how light it fits on my mind, and how cheerfully I can conform to any circumſtances.—The king's penſion remains—the houſe here, and the farm, remain—A little time will make my mother forget this loſs; ſhe

ſhe will recover her health, and I ſhall again be happy."

The Father then mentioned the circumſtance of ſelling the jewels.

This affected Laura at firſt, becauſe it was a proof of her mother's immediate diſtreſs; but ſoon after, ſhe ſaid, "I am glad of it, it will put her at her eaſe for ſome time at leaſt,—perhaps till the banker is able to pay part of what he owes. I am much happier, Father, than I was before I knew the whole ſource of my dear mother's low ſpirits."

"I wiſh," ſaid the Father, "this were the whole."

"O! merciful Heaven!" cried Laura; "What! is there more!"

"Shall I ſpeak," ſaid Pedro, my real ſentiments?"

"Yes, certainly," cried Laura, trembling.

"Without any cover or diſguiſe?" added he.

"I did not think you had ever uſed any," ſaid Laura.

"When we are obliged to blame thoſe we love," reſumed he, "it is natural to do it in the mildeſt manner."

"If

"If I have failed in my duty to my mother, uſe the ſevereſt," ſaid Laura.

The Monk then reminded her, That her mother had always entertained a favourable opinion of Signor Zeluco, which had been confirmed and augmented by time and more intimate acquaintance: that ſhe had heard his propoſal of marriage with great ſatisfaction, for few things are more agreeable to a prudent and affectionate mother, than to ſee her daughter united in marriage with a man deſerving her eſteem: that on finding her daughter's ideas different from her's on this ſubject, ſhe had ſacrificed her own, and with a generoſity which few parents poſſeſs, had never again given her a hint on the ſubject; but it was even then pretty evident the ſacrifice had coſt her a good deal: that Zeluco's gallant behaviour ſince that time, and the very important ſervice he had rendered her, had renewed and ſharpened her mother's original wiſhes, that ſo deſerving a man were as agreeable to her daughter as to herſelf, and probably had inſpired her with freſh

hopes

hopes that his conduct would produce that effect on such a generous and grateful heart as Laura's: that being disappointed in these flattering expectations at a moment when her own private affairs were so much deranged, had, he feared, corroded the breast of Madame de Seidlits, and was the true cause of all her inquietude; for she was endued with that noble and exalted affection which inclined her to be ready to communicate to her daughter the largest protion of all her comforts, and endeavour to keep to herself the whole of what was painful in their common lot, as appeared conspicuous in her concealing from Laura the bankruptcy which so cruelly affected their circumstances, and allowing the whole vexation of that unexpected misfortune to prey upon her own spirits, and undermine her health.

Here the Father paused, to give Laura an opportunity of speaking; but perceiving that she kept her eyes fixed on the ground, and seemed unable to make any reply, he added, "That, upon the whole, it was very

very difficult for him to offer any advice, or point out a remedy; becauſe, he acknowledged that Laura's taſte, even her prejudices, ought to have weight in the choice of a huſband, and that it would be hard to blame her for indulging them. He would not venture to aſſert, that religion required her to ſacrifice them, as Providence certainly might, if it thought proper, find other means of preſerving the health of her mother; and might, in its own good time, free that worthy woman from her preſent difficulties, and prevent her future life from being imbittered with penury, which her elegant taſte and liberal diſpoſition could ſo ill endure.

"Father," ſaid Laura, whoſe eyes were now overflowing, "I am unable at preſent to converſe with you,—leave me to myſelf,—I will, if I can, talk with you more fully to-morrow morning."—They parted.

CHAP. LIV.

Fallit te incautam pietas tua.— VIRG.

LAURA continued reflecting on every thing that the Monk had ſaid and inſinuated—Zeluco's diſintereſted paſſion—his kindneſs to her mother—the obligation he had laid on herſelf—her mother's wiſhes, at firſt ſo plainly ſignified, and afterwards with ſuch delicacy ſuppreſſed—her maternal tenderneſs through all her life, particularly diſplayed by her endeavour to conceal the affair of the jewels and the bankruptcy—and, finally, the declining ſtate of her mother's health, which filled her with the moſt alarming apprehenſions.

In conſequence of revolving thoſe conſiderations in her mind, her diſlike to Zeluco began to appear in her own eyes an unreaſonable prejudice, which gratitude

and filial affection, with united voice, called upon her to overcome.

The next day Laura informed her mother, that ſhe was willing to beſtow her hand on Signor Zeluco. Joy was very ſtrongly mixed with the ſurpriſe which appeared in Madame de Seidlits's countenance. Yet ſhe addreſſed Laura in theſe terms: "I deſire, my dear, that no ſacrifice may be made to any ſuppoſed wiſh of mine on this occaſion; I aſſured you formerly, and I repeat it now, that I think you have a full right in an affair of this nature to follow your own inclinations."

Laura replied, That this alteration of ſentiment had taken place in conſequence of her ſerious reflexions on Signor Zeluco's conduct to them both.

Madame de Seidlits then embracing her daughter, expreſſed her ſatisfaction in the moſt affectionate terms; and communicated the glad tidings to Father Pedro, who was then entering, and immediately joined in Madame de Seidlits's congratulations.

Laura, however, ſaid, That as ſhe had, in a very ſerious and formal manner, refuſed Zeluco when he laſt made his court to her, it was very poſſible he might ſince that time have altered his ſentiments as well as herſelf.

"That I can anſwer for, is not the caſe," ſaid Father Pedro.

"There is no need of any one's anſwering for it," ſaid Madame de Seidlits; "the truth will appear of itſelf. If Signor Zeluco does not ſhew as much ardour as ever to obtain my daughter's hand, he never ſhall obtain it with my conſent."

Laura, ſmiling, thanked her mother for being ſo punctilious where ſhe was concerned; and ſaid, She would explain herſelf in a letter to Signor Zeluco, which ſhe hoped the Father would deliver to him.

Madame de Seidlits objected to her writing. The Father, ſhe ſaid, might, if he pleaſed, acquaint Signor Zeluco, that her daughter was more favourably diſpoſed to-

wards him than formerly, and then leave him to take his courſe.

Laura ſaid, If her mother would truſt to her expreſſing herſelf with propriety on a ſubject of ſo much delicacy, ſhe would prefer writing, as there was one point that required explanation.

"I have perfect confidence in your prudence, my dear," ſaid Madame de Seidlits; "write what you think proper." She then left Laura and Father Pedro together.

Laura directly wrote what follows:

"Signor ZELUCO,

"In the converſation I lately had with you, I candidly told you my ſentiments; with the ſame ſincerity I now inform you they are altered; and that I am ready to accept of your propoſal. It will not ſurpriſe me if ſuch apparent levity ſhould induce you to renounce the too favourable opinion which you had of me; ſhould that be the caſe, you certainly can have no ſcruple in declaring it.

"It

"It is proper that I ſhould further inform you, that ſince I laſt ſaw you, I have learnt that, by the failure of a houſe at Berlin, great part of the money left by my father for the uſe of my mother, and which would have eventually come to me, is, in all probability, irrecoverably loſt.

"LAURA SEIDLITS."

Having ſealed this letter, ſhe gave it to Father Pedro, who carried it directly to Zeluco, whom he found alone in his garden, ruminating a half-digeſted plan of a very atrocious nature, the object of which was the poſſeſſion of Laura.

The Monk announced by his countenance that he brought agreeable news, and delivered to him Laura's letter; which, in ſpite of the cold terms in which it was conceived, as it pointed a more ſpeedy and ſafe road to the gratification of his deſires, filled him with pleaſure, and entirely diſſipated the dark and deſperate purpoſes over which his mind was brooding.

He told Father Pedro, That he would himſelf be the bearer of the anſwer to the letter; and immediately waited on Madame de Seidlits and Laura with all the expreſſions of joy uſual on ſimilar occaſions.

From this moment there was a viſible change for the better in the ſpirits and health of Madame de Seidlits; ſhe was now convinced that her daughter had overcome her groundleſs diſlike of Zeluco, was ſecured in a comfortable and genteel ſituation for life; of courſe nine-tenths of her anxiety were removed. Laura was rejoiced at the favourable alteration in her mother, reflected with ſatisfaction on the efforts ſhe herſelf had made for the ſake of a parent whom ſhe tenderly loved, and flattered herſelf that an union agreed to on her part from ſuch a pious motive, would be more fortunate than could naturally have been expected, conſidering the extreme indifference, to call it by no ſtronger name, which ſhe felt for her intended huſband.

Zeluco ſoon became urgent with Madame de Seidlits that an early day might be

be fixed on for the marriage ceremony; ſaying, that he would in the mean time order the ſettlements to be made according to the terms formerly propoſed.

She expreſſed a deſire that the ceremony might be poſtponed at leaſt till the return of Signora Sporza from Rome; one reaſon of Zeluco's impatience was, that it might be over before her return; dreading a delay, or perhaps a total prevention from that quarter; but, without giving any hint of ſuch fears, he earneſtly inſiſted on the ceremony's taking place immediately after the ſettlements were ready; urging that Signora Sporza would be moſt agreeably ſurpriſed to find that all was over at her return; and that it would give him double pleaſure to ſalute her on their firſt meeting, not as a perſon intended to be, but who actually was, his relation. Madame de Seidlits agreed to leave it to Laura's deciſion, promiſing, at Zeluco's requeſt, not to write to Signora Sporza till the point ſhould be determined.

He knew that Laura wiſhed the ceremony ſhould be private; he directed Father Pedro to hint to her that this would be impoſſible after Signora Sporza's return, whoſe decided taſte for parade and oſtentation they all knew.

Laura was more eaſily brought to agree to an early day than was expected: having already given her conſent; deſpiſing all affected delays, and wiſhing to have every thing conducted with as much privacy as the nature of the caſe would admit, ſhe decided for the earlieſt day that had been mentioned. Beſides the motives already mentioned, there was another which influenced this unfortunate young lady more than all the reſt; ſhe felt her original reluctance to any connexion with Zeluco threatening to return; and ſhe wiſhed the ceremony over, that it might be no longer in her own power to ſhrink from what ſhe now thought both her duty and honour required her to perform.

The writings were prepared, and an early day appointed for the private performance of the marriage ceremony.

During this interval, the heart of Laura, endowed with the moſt exquiſite ſenſibility, and formed for the pureſt and moſt delicate ſenſations of love, was not agitated with thoſe tender fears and pleaſing emotions which fill the virgin's boſom at her approaching union with the beloved object of her wiſhes; ſhe, unhappy maiden! felt an hourly increaſing averſion to the man to whom ſhe was deſtined to plight her faith, which all the ſtruggles of her reaſon could not ſubdue. Her reſolution however enabled her, in a great meaſure, to conceal what her reaſon could not conquer, and her efforts for this purpoſe rendered the pangs of her heart the more acute.

The night preceding the day of her marriage ſhe was diſturbed with gloomy forebodings, diſtracted with horrid dreams, and with terrors of a confuſed nature, which darted like lightning in a black and

ſtormy

ſtormy night acroſs her clouded imagination.

She aroſe early, endeavoured to baniſh thoſe diſmal apprehenſions from her breaſt, and aſſumed as much ſerenity as ſhe poſſibly could at the approach of her mother, who imputed the marks of diſturbance that ſtill remained in the countenance of Laura to no uncommon cauſe; yet all the endearments of maternal affection which Madame de Seidlits laviſhed on her daughter, were ſcarcely able to keep up her ſpirits: two or three times the trembling heart of Laura was ready to break through all reſtraint, avow her ſad forebodings, and beg that this frightful marriage might be poſtponed for ever. She was prevented by the ſatisfaction ſhe perceived it gave her mother, and by the thoughts of the light in which ſuch fickle and childiſh conduct muſt put her in the opinion of others.

The marriage ceremony was performed privately, and Zeluco remained that night at the houſe of Madame de Seidlits.

CHAP. LV.

All claſſic learning loſe on claſſic ground. POPE.

A DAY or two before Laura's marriage took place at Naples, Signora Sporza received a letter from Germany, giving her an account of the ſevere loſs which Madame de Seidlits would ſuſtain by the bankruptcy. This letter, directed to her at Naples, had gone in courſe of poſt to that city, was there detained for ſome days by the neglect of her ſervant, and now conveyed to her the firſt account ſhe had ever had of an event which gave her very great pain. She well knew the limited boundaries of Madame de Seidlits's finances; that the money which ſhe depended on for paying ſome preſſing debts at Naples was in this banker's hands, and of courſe that ſhe would be put to immediate and very great

great diſtreſs by this unlucky accident; ſhe became even afraid, leſt, terrified by a ſpecies of calamity which ſhe had never experienced, Madame de Seidlits ſhould become more urgent than ever with Laura to give her hand to Zeluco, and leſt Laura, in compliance with her mother's deſire, might at laſt conſent: but what made her more uneaſy than all the reſt, was her not having it in her power, from any fund of her own, ſufficiently to relieve the diſtreſs of her friends.

In this ſituation ſhe could think of nobody ſo able, and whom ſhe expected to find ſo willing, to ſupply her in what ſhe wanted, as the Honourable Mr. N—. She ſent a meſſage, deſiring that he would come and ſpeak with her as ſoon as poſſible. Mr. N— was not at home. She ſent again, begging that he would come to her the moment he arrived.

But her impatience increaſing as the time of the departure of the poſt for Naples drew near, ſhe drove to Mr. N—'s lodging, and calling for Buchanan, told him, ſhe

ſhe had buſineſs of importance with his maſter, and would wait for him till he came home. Buchanan ſhewed her into a room adjoining to Mr. Steele's dreſſing-room, and ſeparated from it by a very crazy partition. Steele was there with Mr. Squander, and ſome other young Engliſh-men. Signora Sporza hearing their voices, thought ſhe diſtinguiſhed that of Mr. N—. "No," ſaid Buchanan, "it is a party of young gentlemen, who are taking a courſe of Roman antiquities; they wait at preſent for the antiquarian who inſtructs them; but it is my opinion, if the poor man profit no more by *them*, than they do by his lectures, he will ſoon be in a ſtate of perfect ſtarvation."

A voice was then heard, crying, "Hey, Dutcheſs, what the devil are you about, you ſlut?—ay, to her Pincher! pull away!—tear it from her, boy!"

"Who does he talk to?" ſaid Signora Sporza.

"A couple of quadrupeds, Madam," replied Buchanan; "the one is a ſpaniel, the

the other a terrier. Thoſe young gentlemen cannot proceed in their ſtudies without them."

Here the door of Mr. Steele's room was opened by a ſervant, who ſaid the antiquarian had ſent to know whether they were inclined to go to the Pantheon that day, or to St. Peter's?

"Damn the Pantheon and St. Peter's both," cried Squander; "tell him we can go to neither at preſent.—Zounds! cannot the fellow quietly pocket his money without *boring* us any more with his temples, and churches, and pictures, and ſtatues?"

Steele, however, finding them determined againſt attending the antiquarian, followed the ſervant, and delivered a more civil meſſage.

While he was abſent, Squander, toſſing a couple of maps on the floor, cried, "Here, Dutcheſs, here is *Roma Moderna*;—and there, Pincher—there is *Roma Antiqua* for you, boy—tear away."

When Steele returned, he endeavoured to ſave Rome from the ravages of thoſe Goths,

but

but Squander told him with a loud laugh, that Dutcheſs had made a violent rent in Saint Peter's, and Pincher had torn the Pantheon to pieces.

Squander then propoſed that they ſhould walk to the ſtable, to examine a mare which he had thoughts of purchaſing—Dutcheſs and Pincher followed them, and Mr. N— came home ſoon after.

"I have an unexpected call for money," ſaid Signora Sporza, interrupting his apologies for having made her wait: "I hope you can let me have it."

"I hope I can," ſaid Mr. N——. "How much do you need?"

"Three or four hundred ounces," replied ſhe.

"I am happy that I can, without inconveniency, ſpare you four hundred," replied he.

"I do not think it probable that you will be ſoon repaid," ſaid ſhe.

"I ſhall not need it, replied Mr. N—.

"You are an angel of a man," cried ſhe, "give me then an order on my banker

at

at Naples for that ſum, for I muſt ſend it thither by this day's poſt."

Mr. N— directly gave her the order.

"O my good friend!" cried ſhe, "I muſt not tell you how I come to need this money; but, indeed, it would grieve you if you knew who—" Here Signora Sporza's voice was ſuppreſſed with grief at the idea of the diſtreſs of her two friends, and the tears fell down her cheeks: after a pauſe, ſhe gave her hand to Mr. N—, who led her to her carriage, without either of them uttering another word.

As ſoon as Signora Sporza got home, ſhe wrote a moſt affectionate letter to Madame de Seidlits, complaining of her having concealed the misfortune of the bankruptcy at Berlin, and the diſtreſs in which this accident muſt neceſſarily have involved her and Laura; and informing her, that ſhe herſelf had unexpectedly recovered ſome money for which ſhe had no immediate uſe: ſhe begged therefore very earneſtly, that Madame de Seidlits would accept of five hundred ounces, which ſhe could

could without any inconveniency let her have directly. Signora Sporza added one hundred ounces, all in her power, to the four hundred advanced by Mr. N—.

Madame de Seidlits was with her daughter when ſhe received this letter, which ſhe immediately ſhewed to Laura; they were both much affected with this inſtance of friendſhip, and agreed that it would have an air of unkindneſs not immediately to acquaint Signora Sporza with Laura's marriage, by which ſhe would underſtand that her liberality was unneceſſary.

Zeluco not having now the ſame objection that he had formerly, aſſented without difficulty to their propoſal; and by the next poſt Signora Sporza received the account of Laura's marriage with equal ſurpriſe and concern.

The following day ſhe informed Mr. N—, That ſhe ſhould always conſider herſelf under as great an obligation to him, as if ſhe had made uſe of his credit, but that ſhe now found ſhe ſhould have no oc-

caſion for it, and deſired him to inſtruct his banker at Naples to that effect.

At the interval of ſeveral hours, ſhe informed him of Laura's marriage with Zeluco. "Good heavens," exclaimed he, "is it poſſible!"

"What do you ſee extraordinary," ſaid ſhe, "in a very accompliſhed woman of no fortune marrying a rich man."

"Of no accompliſhments," ſaid Mr. N—.

"Even if that be the caſe, it certainly is nothing extraordinary," ſaid Signora Sporza. "If it is not to be wondered at, I fear it is to be regretted," added Mr. N—.

After this, Signora Sporza ſeemed deſirous to change the ſubject. She would have had no ſcruple in acquainting Mr. N— with any thing which regarded herſelf alone, but thought ſhe had no right to inform him of the ſtate of Madame de Seidlits's circumſtances, and of courſe impreſſing him with the idea that this had driven Laura to the marriage. Signora Sporza was

alſo

alſo much afraid that Laura, in avoiding one ſpecies of diſtreſs, had expoſed herſelf to others, which to one of her turn of mind might prove fully as acute; and therefore ſhe did not like to talk on the ſubject. Mr. N— ſeeing her thoughful and rather reſerved, left her, he himſelf having been ſomewhat ſhocked as well as ſurpriſed at hearing of Laura's marriage.

Whatever uneaſineſs that event occaſioned to Signora Sporza and Mr. N—, it was heard of with much ſatisfaction by his valet Buchanan, who loſt no time in communicating the news to the Baronet, who alſo heard of it with pleaſure; for although he did not think there was ſo much danger as Buchanan did, of Mr. N—'s making propoſals of marriage to Laura immediately; yet he plainly perceived that he had a very high regard for that lady, and he particularly remarked, that his nephew did not at all reliſh a propoſal which had been made by way of ſounding him, that he ſhould accompany his uncle to England without returning to Naples; in ſhort, he

thought, that although Mr. N— might be ſenſible of the inconveniences of uniting himſelf to a woman of Laura's religion and country, yet theſe inconveniences would naturally dwindle in his eſtimation, in proportion as his admiration of the lady increaſed. He therefore could not help being pleaſed with the account of Laura's marriage.

The Baronet obſerved that Mr. N— was by no means in his uſual ſpirits after this intelligence; he therefore omitted nothing that he imagined could tend to the amuſement of his young friend, and frequently propoſed excurſions to Tivoli, Frefcati, and other places in the neighbourhood of Rome.

Mr. Steele was generally of theſe parties; but one day, when the Knight, and Mr. N—— had agreed to dine at Albano, Mr. Steele was prevailed on to ſtay and make one at a cricket match with ſome Britiſh gentlemen and their footmen, who were at that time at Rome.

After

After dinner, the Baronet aſked Mr. N—, how he liked the new acquaintance whom his father and aunt had recommend- to him, meaning Mr. Steele.

" It is impoſſible not to like him," replied N—, " for he is one of the beſt-natured eaſy tempered fellows alive, and at the ſame time of the greateſt integrity. When he firſt arrived at Naples, he ſeemed thoughtful and rather melancholy. This however, being no part of his natural diſpoſition, ſoon wore away, and now the genuine cheerful and obliging colour of his character is almoſt always predominant."

" Does he intend to remain long in Italy?" ſaid the Baronet.

" I believe he will remain as long as I do," replied N—, " and no longer, for he does me the honour of being more attached to me than to Italy; and I for my part have the moſt perfect good-will to him, although he is not preciſely the kind of man whom I ſhould have expected my father to recommend to my particular acquaintance; yet I ſhall ever think myſelf obliged

to him for it. I do not ſo much as know of what family he is," continued Mr. N—, " nor by what means he got acquainted with ours, for Steele is not ſpontaneouſly communicative; and you know, Sir, I am not a great aſker of queſtions."

" I can give you ſome account of thoſe matters," ſaid the Baronet; " for I have frequently heard your father deſcribe his firſt interview with this young man's uncle."

But as we know more of Mr. Steele's family than the Baronet did, we ſhall in the next chapter give the reader a more circumſtantial account than was in his power.

CHAP. LVI.

Anecdotes concerning Mr. Nathaniel Transfer.

MR. Nathaniel Transfer, uncle to the young man now in queſtion, had made a large fortune in the city of London, where he was born, and where he lived happily till the age of ſixty-five. Mr. Transfer's life may ſurely be called happy, ſince it afforded him the only enjoyments which he was capable of reliſhing: he had the pleaſure of finding his fortune increaſing every year; he had a remarkable good appetite, reliſhed a bottle of old port, and ſlept very ſoundly all night, particularly after a bottle of Burton ale. He might have continued ſome years longer in the ſame ſtate of felicity, and perhaps have been conveyed to the other world in a gentle lethargy, without ſickneſs, like a paſſenger who ſleeps the whole way from

Dover to Calais, had it not been for the importunities of a ſet of people who called themſelves his friends; theſe officious perſons were continually diſturbing his tranquillity with ſuch ſpeeches as the following: "Why ſhould you, Mr. Transfer, continue to live all your life in the city, and follow the drudgery of buſineſs like a poor man who has his fortune to make? It is ſurely time for you to begin and enjoy a little eaſe and pleaſure after ſo much toil and labour. What benefit will accrue to you from your great fortune, if you are determined never to enjoy it? Good God, Mr. Transfer, do you intend to ſlave for ever?—You certainly have already more money than you have any uſe for."

This laſt aſſertion was unqueſtionably true, although the inference thoſe reaſoners drew from it was falſe. The fourth part of his fortune was a great deal more than Transfer had any uſe for; gathering of pebbles, or accumulating pounds, would have been equally beneficial to him, if he could

could have taken an equal intereſt in the one occupation as in the other, and if he could have contemplated the one heap with equal ſatisfaction with the other. He had not the ſhadow of a wiſh to ſpend more than he did, nor the leaſt deſire of benefiting any of the human race by the fruits of his labour. But Mr. Transfer's adviſers had forgot the power of habit upon the mind of man. Transfer, like thouſands of others, had begun to accumulate money as the means of enjoying pleaſure at ſome future time; and continued the practice ſo long, that the means became the end—the mere habit of accumulating, and the routine of buſineſs, ſecured him from tedium, and became the greateſt enjoyment of which he was ſuſceptible. Not being aware of this himſelf, poor Transfer at laſt yielded to his friends' importunity. "Well, I am determined to be a ſlave no longer; it does not ſignify talking," ſays he, "I will begin and *enjoy* without any more loſs of time."

He

He wound up his affairs with all poſſible expedition, gave up all connexions in buſineſs at once, bought an eſtate in the country, with a very convenient houſe in good repair upon it, to which he went ſoon after, determined to reſt from his labours, and to take his fill of pleaſure. But he quickly found reſt the moſt laborious thing that he had ever experienced, and that to have nothing to do, was the moſt fatiguing buſineſs on earth. In the courſe of buſineſs, his occupations followed each other at ſtated times, and in regular ſucceſſion; the hours paſſed imperceptibly, without ſeeming tedious or requiring any effort on his part to make them move faſter. But now he felt them to move heavily and ſluggiſhly, and while he yawned along his ſerpentine walks and fringed parterres, he thought the day would never have an end.

His houſe was at too great a diſtance from London for his city friends to go down on a Saturday, and return to town on Monday. His neighbours in the coun-

try were ignorant of that circle of ideas which had rolled in his brain with little variation for the laſt forty years of his life; and he was equally unacquainted with the objects of their contemplations: unleſs it was their mutual love of port wine and Burton ale, they had hardly a ſentiment in common with Mr. Transfer, who was left for many a tedious hour, particularly before dinner, to enjoy rural felicity by himſelf, or with no other company than a few gods and goddeſſes which he had bought in Piccadilly, and placed in his garden. "They talk," ſaid he to himſelf, "of the pleaſures of the country, but would to God I had never been perſuaded to leave the labours of the city for ſuch woful pleaſures. O Lombard-ſtreet! Lombard-ſtreet! in evil hour did I forſake thee for verdant walks and flowery landſcapes, and that there tireſome piece of made water. What walk is ſo agreeable as a walk through the ſtreets of London? what landſcape more flowery than thoſe in the print ſhops? and what water was ever made

made by man equal to the Thames? If here I venture to walk but a ſhort way beyond my own fields, I may be wet through by a ſudden ſhower, and expoſed to the wind of every quarter, before I get under ſhelter; but in walking through the ſtreets of London, if it rains, a man can ſhelter himſelf under the Piazzas; if the wind is in his face while he walks along one ſtreet, he may turn into another; if he is hungry, he can be refreſhed at the paſtry ſhops; if tired, he can call a hackney coach; and he is ſure of meeting with entertaining company every evening at the club."

Such were Mr. Transfer's daily reflections, and he was often tempted to abandon the country for ever, to return to Lombard ſtreet, and re-aſſume his old occupations.

It is probable that he would have yielded to the temptation, had it not been for an acquaintance which he accidentally formed with the Earl of ——.

This nobleman, who was very ſubject to the gout, lived almoſt conſtantly in the country.

country. What contributed with his bad health to give him a diſlike to the town, was his fixed diſapprobation of the public meaſures at that time carried on, and his indignation at the conduct of his eldeſt ſon, who had accepted of a place at court, and voted with adminiſtration.

The Earl reſided therefore ten months in the year at a very noble manſion in the middle of his eſtate, and at no great diſtance from the houſe which Transfer had lately purchaſed. After the death of the Counteſs, his ſiſter Lady Elizabeth, a maiden lady of an excellent character, always preſided at his table, with whom Miſs Warren, the daughter of a navy officer, who had loſt his life in the ſervice, reſided as a friend and companion.

The Earl had often heard of a rich citizen who had bought an eſtate in his neighbourhood, and the whole country reſounded with the ſtyle in which he had ornamented his garden, and the peculiar charms of a little ſnug rotunda which he had juſt finiſh-

ed

ed on the verge of his ground, and which impended the great London road.

As Mr. Transfer ſat one day in this gay fabric, ſmoking his pipe, and enjoying the duſt, the Earl paſſed in his carriage, which, without having obſerved Mr. Tranſfer, he ordered to ſtop, that he might ſurvey the new erection at leiſure. The citizen directly popped his head out at the window, and politely invited his Lordſhip to enter, and he would ſhew him not only that room, but alſo the other improvements he had made in his gardens.

My lord accepted the invitation, and was conducted by Mr. Transfer over all this ſcene of taſte. The marks of aſtoniſhment which the former diſplayed at almoſt every thing he beheld, afforded great ſatisfaction to Mr. Transfer; the turn of whoſe converſation, and the ſingular obſervations he made, equally delighted his Lordſhip.

"Pray, Mr. Transfer," ſaid he, pointing to one of the ſtatues which ſtood at the end of the walk, "what figure is that?"

"That,

"That, my Lord," anſwered Transfer, "that there ſtatue I take to be—let me recollect—yes, I take that to be either Venus or Vulcan, but upon my word I cannot exactly tell which.—Here you, James,"—calling to the gardener; "is this Venus or Vulcan?"

"That is Wenus," anſwered the man; "Wulcan is lame of a leg, and ſtands upon one foot in the next alley."

"Yes, yes; this is Venus, ſure enough," ſaid Transfer; "though I was not quite certain at firſt."

"Perhaps it is not an eaſy matter to diſtinguiſh them," ſaid the Earl.

"Why, they are both made of the ſame metal, my Lord," ſaid Transfer.

"She ought to be bone of his bone, and fleſh of his fleſh," reſumed the Earl, "for you know Venus was Vulcan's wife," Mr. Transfer.

"I am bound to believe ſhe was," replied Transfer, "ſince your Lordſhip ſays ſo."

"You

"You have so many of these gods, Mr. Transfer," said the Earl, "that it is difficult to be master of all their private histories."

"It is so, my Lord," said Transfer; "I was a good while of learning their names,—but I know them all pretty well now.—That there man, in the highland garb, is Mars. And the name of the old fellow with the pitch-fork is Neptune.

"You are now very perfect indeed, Mr. Transfer," said the Earl.

At his departure, my Lord invited Mr. Transfer to dine with him the following day, introduced him to his sister, and was so entertained with his conversation and manners, that he visited him frequently, and often invited him to N—— house, where an apartment was kept for him, to which he was made welcome as often as he found himself tired of his own home, which, to the Earl's great satisfaction, was pretty frequently.

Yet even at N—— house, Mr. Transfer sometimes had occasion to regret Lom-

bard-ſtreet, particularly in the forenoons, and when the weather was bad.

One day, immediately after breakfaſt, when there was no company but Mr. Transfer—"It rains ſo furiouſly," ſaid the Earl, "that there is no driving out.—How ſhall we amuſe ourſelves, Mr. Tranſfer?"

"Why, I ſhould think ſmoking a pipe or two the pleaſanteſt way of paſſing the time in ſuch raw moiſt weather," ſaid Transfer.

"Yes; that might do pretty well for you and me," ſaid the Earl; "but as far as I recollect, neither my ſiſter, nor this young lady, ever ſmoke."

"If that is the caſe," replied Transfer, "we muſt think of ſomething elſe more to their taſte, for I ſcorn not to be agreeable to the ladies."

"Have you got any thing new to read to us, ſiſter?" ſaid the Peer.

"That might do for you and me, brother," ſaid ſhe; "but perhaps Mr. Tranſfer never reads."

"Forgive me, Madam," ſaid Transfer, "I have no particular averſion to it. I have ſometimes read for half an hour at a ſtretch ſince I have been ſettled in the country, and I believe I could hold out longer, if I were not ſo apt to fall aſleep."

Some time after this, Lady Elizabeth expreſſed her ſurpriſe to Mr. Transfer, that as he was a batchelor, he did not think of having ſome of his female relations to take care of his family, rather than a mercenary houſekeeper.

To this Mr. Transfer replied, That he had been put very early to buſineſs, and not being accuſtomed to his relations, he had never cared much for any of them, except his ſiſter, who had lived with him ſeveral years in Lombard-ſtreet; and as he was then *accuſtomed to her*, he had a good deal of kindneſs for her, but that ſhe had made an ungrateful return for all his kindneſs.

"I am ſorry for that," ſaid Lady Elizabeth; "but I hope your ſiſter did nothing very bad."

"Yes,

"Yes, but she did," resumed Transfer; "for she actually married, without my approbation, a young man of the name of Steele, with little fortune, and no experience in business; although she knew that I had a very *warm* man of established credit in my eye for her, provided she would only have had a little patience."

"Provided she had liked the man you had in your eye, and provided he had liked her, you mean, Mr. Transfer," said Lady Elizabeth.

"I beg your Ladyship's forgiveness," said Transfer; "still she would have stood in need of a little patience."

"Could not they have married when they pleased, if they were both willing, and you desirous of the match?" added she.

"I was most desirous of the match," replied Transfer; "but still there was an obstacle."

"What obstacle?" said she.

"The man I had in my eye for my sister had a wife then alive," answered Transfer.

"I confeſs that *was* an obſtacle!" cried Lady Elizabeth.

"But ſhe was dying of a conſumption," added Transfer, "and I had reaſon to believe that he would propoſe marriage to my ſiſter very ſoon after his wife's death."

"Did his wife die as he expected?" ſaid Lady Elizabeth.

"Yes; that ſhe did," ſaid Transfer; "but ſhe might as well have lived, for my ſiſter had ſecretly married the other three weeks before."

"That was unlucky indeed. But what became of your ſiſter and her huſband?"

"I never ſaw my ſiſter from the time of her marriage," ſaid Transfer, "till after her huſband became a bankrupt; for he broke within a few years."

"Poor man!" cried Lady Elizabeth; "but you ſaw your ſiſter after her miſfortune?"

"Yes; I could not help it;" ſaid Tranſfer, "for ſhe burſt in upon me, begging that I would engage my credit for re-eſtabliſhing her huſband.

"Which

"Which I hope you did," ſaid Lady Elizabeth.

"As I had refuſed to have any connexion with him, even when he was in ſome credit, your Ladyſhip can hardly ſuppoſe that I would begin one after he was quite broken," ſaid Transfer.

As Lady Elizabeth was a little ſhocked at this obſervation, ſhe made no reply. It was not in her power to ſay any thing obliging on this occaſion, and it was not in her nature to ſay any thing harſh:—ſhe only was ſilent. Which the Earl, who was preſent, obſerving, "To be ſure, Mr. Transfer," ſaid he, "that is not to be ſuppoſed."

"But yet," reſumed Transfer, "as ſhe was my ſiſter, I told her that if ſhe would give up all connexion with her huſband, I was willing to receive her again into my houſe, and put her child out to nurſe at my own expence."

"That was very fair on your part," ſaid the Earl: "Well, what reply did your ſiſter make to this?"

"Why, ſhe abſolutely refuſed, my Lord; which is a pretty clear proof," continued Mr. Transfer, "of her loving her huſband, though he was a bankrupt, better than her own brother, of whom there was not the leaſt ſuſpicion to his diſcredit; for which reaſon I turned her away, refuſing poſitively to do any thing for her huſband."

"Well, what became of them?" ſaid the Peer.

"I heard afterwards that they were reduced to great diſtreſs.—But what are bankrupts to expect?" continued Transfer; "and as for my ſiſter, ſhe was not to be pitied, becauſe ſhe might have lived perfectly eaſy both in body and mind in my houſe in Lombard-ſtreet, if ſhe had taken my advice, and abandoned her huſband, and ſent her child to nurſe, or to board in the country."

"Nothing can be more clear," ſaid the Earl, "than that you have acted like yourſelf, and have done every thing for your ſiſter that could be expected of you.—But after all, what became of her?"

"A rela-

"A relation of her huſband's happened to die, and left him a ſmall eſtate in Yorkſhire, of five or ſix hundred a year; and as neither he, nor my ſiſter, had any *ambition*, and were afraid of a new bankruptcy if they had ſettled in town; he retired to his ſmall eſtate, where he died a few years ago, leaving no other children but the ſon whom ſhe refuſed to ſend out to nurſe, and who has now arrived at man's eſtate."

"Whereas," added the Earl, "if ſhe had followed your advice, and given him out to nurſe, ſhe might probably have had him off her hands long ago."

"Why, there is no knowing what might have happened," ſaid Transfer, "for moſt of thoſe children die before they arrive at the years of diſcretion, which is very well ordered, as they have nothing to live on."

"Well, but Mr. Transfer," reſumed the Peer, "do *you* ever intend to marry?"

"No, my Lord," replied he; "I cannot ſay I do;—as I never was *accuſtomed to a wife*, I am not much inclined to matri-

mony; for through the whole courſe of my life I have never found any thing agree with me, but what I am accuſtomed to."

"That is very wiſely obſerved," ſaid the Earl; "but this young man of courſe will be your heir?"

"Unqueſtionably," anſwered Transfer; "the young man never offended me; and as he is my neareſt of kin, I ſhould be ſorry to do an unjuſt thing, and leave my fortune to any other body.—No, no; he ſhall have all at my death, but he muſt wait till then; beſides, it is ſo far lucky that it ſaves my making a will, to which I have always had an averſion; for this young man being my lawful heir, there is no need to employ an attorney to leave him his due."

CHAP. LVII.

Reaſons for going into Holy Orders.

Gaudet equis, canibuſque. HOR.

THE ſtrange apathy which Transfer diſcovered, and which ſhocked Lady Elizabeth, ſeemed to be a ſource of amuſement to her brother; who, however, was ſurpriſed at perceiving that Transfer expreſſed not the leaſt deſire of ever ſeeing an only ſiſter, and ſtill more that he ſhould have the ſame indifference towards a nephew whom he conſidered as his heir, and who he owned had never offended him. The inſenſibility of Transfer for his ſiſter and nephew ſeemed to inſpire the Earl with an intereſt in them. He wrote to an acquaintance who reſided in that part of the country in which Mrs. Steele and her ſon lived, deſiring an account of both their characters,

characters, and a particular detail regarding their circumſtances and manner of life, eſpecially what the views of the ſon were.

In conſequence of this, the Earl was informed, that Mrs. Steele was an agreeable woman, of a cheerful temper and benevolent diſpoſition, without much foreſight, and diſtractedly fond of her ſon, whom ſhe had never been able to contradict in her life: that he was a young fellow of that genuine and rare good-nature that reſiſts the uſual effect of ſo much indulgence; for, although his mother's ſtudy was to gratify, not to correct, his humours, this ill-judged partiality had only prevented his improvement, without rendering him capricious, unfeeling, or wicked: that while he remained at ſchool, he had applied himſelf to nothing; but that ever ſince he left it, he had applied himſelf with unremitting diligence to hunting and ſhooting, in both of which, and in the knowledge of horſes and dogs, he had made great proficiency for his age; that he was

made

made welcome wherever he went, and was a great favourite with man, woman, and child, all over the country: and that a noble Lord, of very great influence, who was particulary fond of him, had lately told young Steele, that he would be very happy to have it in his power to be of ſervice to him; adding, That if he choſe to go into the army, he would immediately procure him a cornetcy of dragoons, and would do all in his power to aſſiſt his promotion afterwards.

Steele, after expreſſing his gratitude for ſo much goodneſs, declined the propoſal, ſaying, he was quite unfit for the army.

The nobleman was the more ſurpriſed at this, as he had a notion that the army was the profeſſion, of all others, for which Mr. Steele was fitteſt, being genteel in his perſon, of a bold intrepid diſpoſition, and capable of bearing the greateſt bodily fatigue.

"You may, perhaps, have no inclination for the ſervice," ſaid his Lordſhip.—"But—"

"Nay,

"Nay, my Lord," reſumed Mr. Steele, "if there were any likelihoood of a war, I ſhould prefer it to any other line of life; becauſe, in the time of war, a ſoldier is continually occupied, and can have no wiſh but doing his duty—but then what a ſad buſineſs muſt it be in the time of peace?"

"During a ſucceſsful war," ſaid my Lord, "a ſoldier will naturally be in high ſpirits; but I do not perceive why he ſhould be peculiarly ſad in the time of peace."

"*I* certainly ſhould, my Lord," ſaid Steele; "your Lordſhip knows my exceſſive fondneſs for ſhooting, and the chaſe;—to be obliged to attend my regiment during thoſe ſeaſons would render me quite miſerable."

"Why, the ſame objection," ſaid his Lordſhip, "may be made to law, phyſic, and almoſt every other profeſſion."

"It may ſo," replied Steele.

"Then you wiſh to be of no profeſſion," ſaid the Peer.

"Forgive me, my Lord," ſaid the other; "I am ſenſible that my circumſtances are ſo narrow, that I cannot hope to indulge my taſte for my favourite amuſements in the ſtyle I could wiſh, without being aſſiſted by the emoluments of ſome profeſſion."

"What profeſſion then would you chooſe to be of?" rejoined his Lordſhip.

"That of a clergyman," replied Mr. Steele.

"A clergyman!" exclaimed the Peer.

"Yes, my Lord," continued Steele; "I confeſs I have a great deſire to enter into holy orders."

"I cannot conceive," ſaid the Peer, "what can be your inducement."

"My fondneſs for hunting and ſhooting," anſwered Steele; "and if, by your Lordſhip's favour, I could obtain a tolerable living in a hunting county, I ſhould think myſelf extremely happy. The buſineſs of a clergyman, as your Lordſhip knows, from many examples, is no way incompatible with a paſſion for thoſe manly amuſe-

amuſements, without which I am ſure life would ſeem a very dull affair in my eyes."

"But there are certain duties of a clergyman," ſaid the Peer, "which, in ſome people's eyes, are not exceedingly entertaining."

"I ſhould think them no great hardſhips, my Lord," ſaid Steele: "In caſe of the indiſpoſition of my curate, on particular occaſions, I have no manner of objection to reading prayers, or to preaching; and on the whole I do not deſpair of rendering myſelf agreeable to the generality of my flock; for, with regard to comforting the ſick and relieving the poor, I thank Heaven I am diſpoſed to perform thoſe duties whether I ſhould ever be a clergyman or not."

"All this is very well," reſumed the Peer; "but, my dear Steele, are not there ſome previous ſtudies neceſſary before you can be—"

"Certainly;" replied the other, interrupting his Lordſhip; "and I have of

late been preparing myſelf accordingly. I confeſs I was too inattentive at ſchool, which renders this taſk the harder upon me now; yet I hope to ſurmount all obſtacles, and give ſatisfaction to the biſhop. My paſſion for hunting and ſhooting inſtigates me to exertions in ſtudy which I never knew before."

"Nay, Heaven forefend," replied the Peer, ſmiling, "that I ſhould attempt to blunt ſuch laudable inſtigations. All I have to ſay is, that when you are once fairly ordained, I beg you will let me know: there is ſome conſiderable chance of a living, which is in my gift, being vacant very ſoon, and you may rely upon it, my dear Steele, that if you continue in your preſent way of thinking, and are completely dubbed, that I will prefer no man to yourſelf."

CHAP. LVIII.

Ille bonis faveatque, et concilietur amicis. Hor.

THIS account of Mrs. Steele and her ſon did not diminiſh the inclination the Earl had to ſerve them, in which he was aſſiſted by Lady Elizabeth. They found no difficulty in prevailing on Mr. Tranſfer to give Steele an invitation to viſit him, with which the young man immediately complied. His appearance, natural complaiſance, and everlaſting good-humour, rendered him highly agreeable to all the family at N— Houſe, without excepting Miſs Warren, the young lady who lived with Lady Elizabeth. Here it will not be improper to mention by what accident this young lady came to be introduced into the family of the Earl of ———.

Lady Elizabeth happened to paſs through the county town at a time when the inhabitants,

bitants, by ringing of bells, bonfires, and illuminations, were announcing their joy for a victory obtained by a celebrated naval commander. She ſtopped her carriage at the door of an old female acquaintance, intending merely to leave a meſſage; but underſtanding that ſhe was a little indiſpoſed, Lady Elizabeth went to ſee her; as ſhe entered the chamber, a beautiful girl of about thirteen or fourteen years of age, with ſevere marks of ſorrow, went out. After Lady Elizabeth had ſatisfied herſelf that her friend's indiſpoſition was but ſlight, and that ſhe was in a way of recovery, ſhe inquired who that lovely girl was who had juſt left the room, and why ſhe ſeemed ſo much afflicted.

"Alas, poor girl," replied the other, "ſhe has received the account of her father's being killed in the very action for which the citizens are diſplaying all thoſe marks of joy. Unfortunate girl," continued ſhe, "by her father's death, ſhe is not only deprived of her only ſurviving parent, but perhaps of the very means of

ſubſiſtence; for there is great reaſon to fear that her father, who was a very generous as well as a brave man, has left more debts than effects."

"Poor young creature," ſaid Lady Elizabeth, "how much is ſhe to be pitied—how came you acquainted with her?"

"I am a diſtant relation of her mother's," replied Lady Elizabeth's friend; "on hearing of her father's death, I invited her to my houſe, that I might ſooth her affliction, and prevent her being ſhocked at ſeeing her young companions, unmindful of her particular calamity, take part in the general joy."

The humane and benevolent heart of Lady Elizabeth was ſtrongly affected at this recital; ſhe continued for ſome time in ſilent contemplation on the hard lot of this unhappy orphan, whoſe tender boſom was wounded by one of the ſharpeſt arrows in the whole quiver of adverſity, at a time when the hearts of all around her were elated with joy.

She

She desired that the young lady might be introduced to her; she spoke to her the soothing language of sympathy; and was charmed with her appearance, her conversation, and the whole of her behaviour.

Lady Elizabeth afterwards made an application to this young lady's neareſt relations, proposing to take on herself the charge of her maintenance and education, to which they agreed with the most ready acquiescence. She carried her to N—— house; the Earl, who had known Miss Warren's father a little, and had a high esteem for his character, was delighted with what his sister proposed, and Miss Warren gained daily upon the affections of both, and was now the confidential friend and inseparable companion of her patroness.

We now return to Mr. Transfer, who became in a short time *accustomed* to his nephew, and at length so fond of him, that he could hardly bear his absence for a few hours.

Not all the interest which Steele had in pleasing Mr. Transfer, however, nor even

the more powerful attractions of Miſs Warren, could prevail on this young man to remain at his uncle's houſe, after he received a letter from his mother, written in rather low ſpirits, and expreſſing a deſire to ſee him.

He aſſured his uncle, in ſpite of his ſolicitations to the contrary, that he would ſet out for Yorkſhire the very next morning. Transfer complained of this to the Earl, ſaying, It was ſtrange perverſeneſs in the young man to prefer his mother's company, who could do nothing for him, to his, who intended to do ſo much.

"The general run of people would certainly act otherwiſe," replied the Earl; "but why cannot Mr. Steele have the pleaſure both of your company and his mother's? for although ſhe ought not to be put on an equal footing with a man of your *great wealth*, Mr. Transfer, yet the affection the young man ſhews to his mother is no way unnatural neither."

"I do not aſſert that it is," ſaid Tranſfer, "but what would your Lordſhip have me

me to do, for I do not love to part with this youth, after having become *accuſtomed to him;* and perhaps his mother may not allow him to return ſo ſoon as I could wiſh."

"Invite his mother to come with him," replied the Earl, "and then he'll ſtay as long as you pleaſe."

This was an expedient which had never entered into Transfer's mind; but he agreed to it the moment it was propoſed. He wrote to his ſiſter to detain her ſon as ſhort a time as poſſible, and begged of her to accompany him to his houſe. Lady Elizabeth wrote alſo to Mrs. Steele, expreſſing a deſire to be acquainted with her, and urging her to forget old miſunderſtandings, and accept without delay of her brother's invitation.

Mrs. Steele came accordingly with her ſon, and was received by her brother with ſome appearance of kindneſs, while to her ſon he diſplayed as much as was in his nature. The following day ſhe was viſited

by the family at N—— Houſe; was invited there, and treated in the moſt obliging manner: ſhe had not reſided a couple of months with Mr. Transfer, till he entirely forgot Lombard-ſtreet, and felt leſs deſire of forſaking his own manſion for that of the Earl; and, at laſt, being again accuſtomed to his ſiſter, and ſhe beſtowing more attention to amuſe him, he became fonder of her company than even of her ſon's, who, it muſt be confeſſed, began to have a greater deſire for Miſs Warren's company, than for that of either his uncle or mother.

This was a happineſs he never enjoyed, however, but in the preſence of Lady Elizabeth, to whom his partiality for her young friend was very evident.

The Earl took occaſion one day, when he found himſelf alone with Transfer, to mention young Steele's fancy for being a clergyman.

"That is a buſineſs," ſaid Transfer, "which there is very little to be made of.

I have no notion of purchaſing in a lottery where there are ſo many blanks and ſo few prizes, my Lord."

"Would you not be happy to ſee your nephew a Biſhop?" ſaid the Earl.

"I ſhould be much happier to ſee him an independent gentleman," replied Tranſfer.

"You may enjoy that happineſs when you pleaſe," ſaid the Earl; "for it is in your power to make him ſo without injuring yourſelf, or any perſon on earth."

This led to a long converſation, in which his Lordſhip, with leſs difficulty than he expected, convinced Mr. Transfer, that nothing would do him ſo much honour, or contribute more to his own happineſs, than executing what had been thus accidentally hinted. Mrs. Steele and her ſon had by their cheerful attention gained the citizen's heart ſo completely, as almoſt to alter his nature; he had no enjoyment with which they were not intimately connected; and when the Earl told him, that by giving Steele a genteel independence, he would

add the generous ties of gratitude and eſteem to thoſe of blood, by which the young man was already bound to him, the citizen became impatient till the deed was drawn out, which, to the aſtoniſhment of Mrs. Steele and her ſon, was preſented to him as ſoon as executed.

CHAP. LIX.

Neglected, Tray and Pointer lie;
And covies unmoleſted fly. PRIOR.

IN the mean while, the ſhooting ſeaſon paſſed away without Mr. Steele ſhewing any deſire of profiting by it; his growing paſſion for Miſs Warren entirely occupied his mind. He long watched, in vain, for a proper opportunity of declaring his ſentiments to her, and when the long-expected opportunity occurred, the timidity which always attends ſincere and reſpectful love, prevented him from ſeizing it. But the affable and obliging character of Lady Elizabeth encouraged him to mention to *her* thoſe ſentiments which he had been unable to expreſs to the young lady herſelf.

Lady Elizabeth's anſwer implied that he ought to attempt no engagement of ſuch

a nature, without the approbation of his mother and uncle.

He ſaid, he was certain of the former, but deferred ſpeaking to his uncle till he had ſome reaſon to hope that his propoſals were not diſagreeable to Miſs Warren.

Lady Elizabeth conſented to ſound her young friend on the ſubject, but ſhe firſt informed her brother.

"I am rejoiced to hear this," ſaid the Earl; "for Transfer and his ſiſter ſeem both fond of her, and I dare ſay will be pleaſed with the propoſal; Steele is ſo very good-humoured a young fellow, that I am convinced he will make the ſweet girl happy; and in her he will have one of the beſt wives in England. But how is ſhe inclined herſelf?"

"That is what I am not quite certain of," replied Lady Elizabeth; "but Mr. Steele's appearance and diſpoſition muſt be powerful advocates in his favour."

When Lady Elizabeth mentioned to Miſs Warren what paſſed between her and Mr. Steele,

Steele, the young lady, with ſome degree of ſolemnity and earneſtneſs, begged to know whether her Ladyſhip or the Earl had any wiſh, or were at all intereſted in the anſwer ſhe ſhould give to Mr. Steele.

"None, my ſweet friend," ſaid Lady Elizabeth; "but that it ſhould be dictated by your own genuine uninfluenced inclination."

"The whole of your ever noble and generous behaviour ought to have left me no doubt of ſuch an anſwer," cried Miſs Warren, as ſhe kiſſed her Ladyſhip's hand. "I will now, as you deſire, tell you my genuine ſentiments. It is ſome time," continued ſhe, "ſince I perceived Mr. Steele's partiality for me, and thought it not impoſſible that he might make this propoſal. I have therefore had time to weigh the matter fully. Mr. Steele is evidently of a cheerful and obliging diſpoſition; he is agreeable in his perſon, and I doubt not poſſeſſes other good qualities: I know what his uncle has already done for him, and what there is a probability of his ſtill doing;

ing; yet all thoſe advantages do not tempt me from the happy aſylum I have found at N—— Houſe, for theſe ſix years paſt; and although I think myſelf obliged to Mr. Steele for his good opinion, I would rather remain the friend of Lady Elizabeth N——, than be the wife of Mr. Steele."

"If the one were incompatible with the other, I am the laſt perſon in the world that would have propoſed it," ſaid Lady Elizabeth.

"I would rather, if left to my own choice," ſaid Miſs Warren, "remain the one without being the other."

Lady Elizabeth urged her friend no farther, but in the moſt ſoothing terms poſſible communicated her determination to Mr. Steele, whoſe whole behaviour was expreſſive then, and for ſome time afterwards, of the ſeverity of his diſappointment, and the permanency of his eſteem for the lady.

The truth was, that Miſs Warren, although her heart was diſengaged, and although ſhe thought favourably of Steele in

ſome

ſome reſpects, yet being herſelf a young lady of a very accompliſhed mind, ſhe perceived Mr. Steele's deficiency in certain parts of knowledge, which ſhe thought requiſite for ſecuring to a gentleman the eſteem of the world.

The effect which her refuſal had on Mr. Steele's ſpirits appeared, in ſpite of his efforts to conceal it; he was teazed and diſtreſſed by his uncle's inquiries into the cauſe of the alteration in his ſpirits, and finding no return of taſte for his former amuſements, he told the Earl that he had a ſtrong inclination to go abroad for a year, and begged of his Lordſhip to endeavour to make his deſign palatable to Mr. Transfer.

The Earl, to whom his ſiſter had communicated Miſs Warren's determination, approved very highly of Mr. Steele's plan, not only as the moſt likely meaſure that could be adopted for diſſipating that uneaneſs and dejection, which obſcured the natural gaiety of his diſpoſition, but alſo for the improvement of his mind, and enlarging the range of his ideas.

He

He repreſented therefore to Mr. Transfer, that his nephew's health was evidently on the decline, and that a ſhort excurſion to the continent was neceſſary for its re-eſtabliſhment. After ſome ſtruggle, the Earl obtained Mr. Transfer's aſſent; Steele himſelf having by the ſame argument previouſly prevailed on his mother, not only to abſtain from any kind of oppoſition, but even to be ſolicitous for his ſpeedy departure.

The Earl's ſecond ſon, the Honourable Mr. N——, had ſome conſiderable time before this returned to Italy, partly from choice, but in ſome degree alſo on account of a complaint in his breaſt, and was to ſpend the enſuing winter at Naples. Mr. Steele had occaſionally heard the Earl read ſome parts of his letters, from which, as well as from his general character, he had formed a very high opinion of him, and had a great deſire to be of his acquaintance. The Earl therefore gave him a letter to his ſon, recommending him as a young gentleman in whoſe welfare he was greatly intereſted;

tereſted; and Lady Elizabeth wrote to her nephew in the ſame ſtrain.

When Mr. Steele came to London, he accidentally met with an acquaintance going to Milan; they went together, ſtopping only one day at Paris, and that merely becauſe the gentleman had ſome buſineſs to tranſact there, which when he had finiſhed he had the complaiſance to tell Steele, that although he himſelf was perfectly well acquainted with Paris, and had no farther buſineſs in it, yet rather than loſe the pleaſure of his company to Milan, he would remain a week or two at Paris, that he might have an opportunity of viewing ſome of the curioſities of this celebrated capital before he went to Italy.

Steele thanked him, but begged that their journey might not be retarded an inſtant on his account. "I thought," ſaid his companion, "I heard you ſay you never had been here before."

"I never was," ſaid Steele.

"Would not you like then to take a view of the town before we go?" ſaid the other.

"Why,

"Why, faith," replied Steele, "I never had much pleaſure in looking at towns; and as for this here, I am heartily tired of it already."

They ſet out therefore directly for Milan, and the day after their arrival Steele meeting with an Engliſh footman, who had already made the tour of Italy, engaged him, and proceeded the following morning to Rome, where he ſlept one night, and next day he told his ſervant to order poſt-horſes, that they might continue their journey to Naples.

"Good God," cried the man, "will not your honour ſtay one ſingle day at Rome?"

"I have ſome thoughts of it," ſaid Steele, "when I return."

He arrived in good health at Naples, where he ſoon found Mr. N—, who, independent of the warm recommendations from his father and aunt, was in a ſhort time ſo pleaſed with the careleſs good humour and ſingularity of Steele's diſpoſition, that he procured him an apartment in the

the houſe where he himſelf lodged; and they had lived together ever ſince.

The Baronet could not give ſo particular a detail of Steele's family as has been now given; but he mentioned every circumſtance relating to them that was known to himſelf—after which he and Mr. N—— returned from Albano to Rome, where they found Mr. Steele juſt returned to his lodgings from the cricket party.

And there we ſhall leave them, and return to Naples and to Laura.

CHAP. LX.

Regretter ce que l'on aime eſt un bien, en comparaiſon de vivre avec ce que l'on hait. LA BRUYERE.

ZELUCO was not long married before it was pretty generally known, notwithſtanding the intention of keeping it for ſome time ſecret. The marriage, therefore, was publicly avowed, and Laura appeared in all the brilliancy of dreſs and equipage, which riches can procure, and the oſtentatious taſte of her huſband exacted. She was univerſally admired, and the acquaintance of her huſband aſſiduouſly courted by many who, previous to his marriage, ſhewed no great inclination to cultivate it.

Poſſeſſed of great riches, with the advantage of birth, and having obtained the woman he had long ardently deſired, it is

natural to imagine that Zeluco now enjoyed happineſs, or at leaſt tranquillity; but any tolerable degree of tranquillity is incompatible with perfidy and fraud: beſides, this wretched man poſſeſſed two qualities which never mingle ſmoothly in the character of a huſband; he was exceſſively jealous, and exceſſively vain of his wife's beauty: a wiſer man might have been excuſed for the latter, but the conduct and character of Laura left him without any rational pretext for the former. To drive round the beauteous environs of Naples in the carriage with her mother, to improve her mind by books, and to divert it by muſic, from certain painful reflections which often intruded themſelves, in ſpite of all her endeavours, were the ſole amuſements and occupations ſhe was inclined to in the abſence of her huſband. When he was preſent, which was by no means the moſt comfortable part of her time, ſubſtituting a ſenſe of duty, all that was in her power, in the place of affection, which ſhe could not command, ſhe

adapted her converſation and conduct, as much as ſhe could, to what ſhe thought would pleaſe him: but if there are tempers of ſuch an unfortunate frame that even when joined to goodneſs of diſpoſition, it is impoſſible to pleaſe, how then could the efforts of this unhappy young woman prove ſucceſsful, who had to deal with a peeviſh temper engrafted on a vicious diſpoſition?

Zeluco's vanity was continually inciting him to carry Laura to places of public reſort; yet ſuch was the capricious abſurdity of the man, that he was at once deſirous of diſplaying the beauty of his wife, and unable to bear the admiration which it always attracted. And when ſhe was particularly accoſted by thoſe gentlemen whom he himſelf had introduced to her acquaintance, the commoneſt civility on her part, ſuch as the laws of good manners render indiſpenſable, filled him with chagrin, and ſeldom failed, for ſome hours, to throw an additional ſhade of ill-humour upon the habitual gloom of his temper: ſo that it was impoſſible for Laura to gratify his

vanity

vanity without exciting his jealouſy; and it is difficult to determine, even during the period in which his fondneſs was at the height, whether ſhe afforded *him* more pain or pleaſure, while it is certain that his behaviour, from the beginning, filled *her* with vexation and remorſe.

An Italian of high rank, from a different part of Italy, happened at this time to come to Naples, where he lived at conſiderable expence, and in an oſtentatious ſtyle; he was preſented to Laura by Zeluco himſelf, ſoon after their marriage: peculiarly pleaſed with her converſation and behaviour, this nobleman addreſſed himſelf more to her than to any other woman, as often as he met her in public. This was remarked by Zeluco, and produced the uſual effect on his temper.—Laura, conſcious of no impropriety in thought or conduct, imputed her huſband's ill-humour on this, as on other ſimilar occaſions, to an unfortunate habit of fretting without cauſe, and took notice of it in no other way than by redoubling her endeavours to

pleaſe him. Zeluco himſelf, though he was unable to controul the ſulkineſs of his temper, was, for ſome time, aſhamed to mention to her what occaſioned, or rather what increaſed it, in the preſent inſtance. At length, however, he expreſſed ſome diſapprobation of the attention which this nobleman paid her.

"I will moſt cheerfully abſtain," ſaid Laura, "from going to thoſe places where I have any chance of meeting him."

"How is that poſſible?" ſaid Zeluco; "he is at every public place."

"I will go to no public place," ſaid Laura.

"That would ſeem very ſingular," reſumed he.

"The ſingularity is of ſmall importance," ſaid ſhe, "provided you are ſatisfied."

"No;" replied he, "it would be improper for you not to go to thoſe aſſemblies which all people of rank frequent; but you may behave in ſuch a manner when you

ſee

ſee him there, as will prevent his ſpeaking to you any more."

"In what manner is that?" ſaid Laura.

"A woman who is diſpleaſed with a man's addreſſes, is never at a loſs to find it out," replied he.

"But I have not the leaſt reaſon to be diſpleaſed with the manner in which this gentleman addreſſes me," ſaid ſhe; "yet, if you *have*, I certainly wiſh to converſe with him no more."

"Every woman who has no deſire of pleaſing a man," reſumed Zeluco, "knows an eaſy way of breaking up all connection with him, without abſenting herſelf from the places where there is a probability of meeting him."

"Well," replied Laura, endeavouring to ſmile, "I am a woman quite ignorant of that eaſy way, yet aſſuredly I have no particular deſire of pleaſing the perſon in queſtion."

"I am not quite ſure of that," ſaid he.

"How ſhall I prove it to you?" reſumed Laura.

"By turning abruptly from him," replied Zeluco, "when he next ſpeaks to you."

"Would not that be rude," replied Laura, "to one of his rank, and whom you introduced to me?—but I am ſure you ſay this only in jeſt.—Come, my way is the beſt—let me avoid public places—at leaſt till he leaves Naples; it is but three weeks."

"How came you to know ſo exactly," ſaid Zeluco, with an air of ſurpriſe, "when he was to leave Naples?"

"By your informing me," replied Laura.

"My informing you!" ſaid he.

"Yes," replied Laura; "do you not remember that a few days ago you told my mother and me that he was to ſet out for Rome in leſs than a month?"

"The news ſeems to have made a ſtrong impreſſion on you," ſaid Zeluco, peeviſhly.

"Juſt enough to make me recollect it now, for the firſt time ſince you mentioned it," replied Laura.

"Well,

"Well, you will behave as you think proper," ſaid Zeluco, in a little better humour; "but you cannot but underſtand his drift in the great attention he pays you."

"I have ſeen nothing but politeneſs in his behaviour to me," ſhe replied; "but the moment he diſcovers any drift that ought to be diſagreeable to you, I ſhall certainly turn from him in the manner you deſire."

Zeluco withdrew, and Laura, with a ſigh, exclaimed, "Alas! my mother, had you known this man, the wealth of India could not have bought your conſent to his being united to your poor unfortunate daughter."—She then burſt into a flood of tears, and having in this manner aſſuaged the anguiſh of her heart, ſhe wiped her eyes, ſummoned all her firmneſs, and met her mother and huſband at dinner with a ſerene and cheerful countenance.

CHAP. LXI.

The Priſoners.

SOME little time after this, Madame de Seidlits received a very unexpected letter from her ſon-in-law, dated from Rome, in which he acquainted her, that his friend Baron Carloſtein and he were juſt arrived in that city, and intended ſoon to pay her a viſit at Naples.

" Baron Carloſtein had long had a great inclination to viſit Italy, and had received his ſovereign's permiſſion for that purpoſe; while he was preparing for his journey, it occurred to him, that his friend Seidlits would probably be happy to have an opportunity of ſeeing his mother and ſiſter, particularly the latter, of whoſe marriage he had lately heard. The Baron, therefore, aſked it as a particular favour of Captain Seidlits to accompany him; and on the Captain's

Captain's agreeing, the king's leave was obtained for him alſo; and the two friends ſet out together. Carloſtein ſoon perceived that his companion had infinitely more impatience to be with Madame de Seidlits and Laura, than admiration of thoſe maſterpieces of art which detain the connoiſſeur and antiquarian in their travels through Italy. That Captain Seidlits therefore might paſs as much as poſſible of the period for which he had leave of abſence with his mother and ſiſter, Carloſtein had the complaiſance to continue his courſe directly, and with great expedition, to Rome. After a haſty view of what is moſt remarkable in that city, he propoſed to accompany his friend to Naples, remain ſome time there; and, on his return to Germany, travel all over Italy with that leiſure and attention which the curioſities the country preſents, merit.

Captain Seidlits, in his letter to his mother-in-law, aſſured her that the banker's failure would not be attended with the bad conſequences which were feared at firſt; and concluded

concluded by expreſſions of the warmeſt affection for his ſiſter, with compliments to her huſband, to whom, he added, he was impatient to be known, and whom he was prepared to eſteem.

This letter was followed, within a few days, by one from Signora Sporza, informing Madame de Seidlits that Mr. N—— had met with the Baron Carloſtein and Captain Seidlits at the Cardinal Bernis' aſſembly, and had preſented thoſe gentlemen to her. She dwelt a good deal on the praiſes of both, adding, That they were ſo much approved of by the Roman ladies, that ſhe imagined they would find it difficult to leave Rome ſo ſoon as they intended: ſhe concluded by warning Madame de Seidlits and Laura not to be greatly ſurpriſed or diſappointed if Captain Seidlits did not arrive at Naples ſo ſoon as he had appointed.

Baron Carloſtein and his friend had been recommended in a diſtinguiſhed manner to Cardinal de Bernis, who ſent them an invitation to dinner ſome days after the date of

of Signora Sporza's letter above mentioned. At his very hoſpitable and magnificent board they met with the honourable Mr. N——, his uncle, Mr. Steele, and a variety of other ſtrangers; it happened that there was at table one perſon, at leaſt, from almoſt every country of Europe; the converſation turned a good deal on national character, and ſeveral lively traits were mentioned by way of illuſtration; but whether it was owing to a notion that the Britiſh bear ſtrokes of this kind with leſs good-humour than the inhabitants of other countries, or whatever was the cauſe, it ſo happened, that for a conſiderable time no mention was made of any peculiar feature belonging to them.

At length the Cardinal, addreſſing himſelf to Mr. N——, ſaid, he could not help thinking, that the melancholy generally attributed to the Engliſh nation was greatly exaggerated. He mentioned many Engliſh gentlemen with whom he had the pleaſure of being acquainted, who were as gay as any Frenchmen, without the levity of which

which his countrymen were ſo much accuſed; beſides, continued he, politely, "Can any thing be leſs probable, than that the nation, which perhaps of all others has the beſt reaſon to be cheerful, ſhould be the moſt melancholy?"—In return to this, Mr. N—— obſerved, That what was the moſt probable, was not always the moſt true; that, in his opinion, nothing was ſo much to be envied as that charming quality which ſeemed inherent in the French nation, of ſupporting, without murmuring, and even with gaiety, many of thoſe vexatious incidents in life which ſink the people of other nations into dejection, or overwhelm them with deſpair; that it was prepoſterous to call *that* quality of the mind levity which does what philoſophy often attempts in vain. As for the melancholy imputed to his countrymen, he was much afraid, that, notwithſtanding the particular exceptions which had come under his Eminence's obſervation, it was but too well founded; and he illuſtrated his aſſertion by the following anecdote:

"During

"During a late war between France and Great Britain," ſaid Mr. N——, "an Engliſh veſſel of ſuperior force took a French frigate after an obſtinate engagement, in which the French officers diſplayed that intrepidity which is ſo natural to them. The frigate was brought into a commercial town upon the Engliſh coaſt, and the officers were treated with great hoſpitality by ſome of the principal inhabitants: one very rich merchant in particular invited them frequently to his houſe, where he entertained them in a very magnificent manner.—The firſt day on which they dined with him, his lady behaved with ſuch peculiar attention to the priſoners, that ſhe ſeemed to neglect all the other gueſts at her table. After the company had withdrawn, ſhe ſpoke highly to her huſband of the politeneſs and eaſy agreeable manners of the French nation, and added, that it gave her pleaſure to perceive that the French gentlemen who had juſt left them, inſtead of giving way to vain repining, or allowing their ſpirits to

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be depreſſed by their misfortune, had ſhewn the utmoſt cheerfulneſs and gaiety during the whole repaſt, all except one gentleman, who ſeemed much dejected, and almoſt entirely overcome with the idea of being a priſoner. This ſhe accounted for by ſupoſing that his loſs was greater than that of all the reſt put together; and ſhe apprehended, from the obſtinate ſilence he had retained, and from the diſcontent and melancholy ſo ſtrongly marked in his countenance, that the poor gentleman would not long ſurvive his misfortune.

"I cannot imagine who you mean," ſaid the huſband.

The lady deſcribed the man ſo exactly, that it was impoſſible to miſtake him.

"That unfortunate gentleman," ſaid the huſband, "is none of the priſoners; he is the captain of the Engliſh veſſel who took them.

CHAP. LXII.

Carloſtein and Seidlits arrive at Naples.

ALL the allurements of Rome, however, could not overcome Captain Seidlits's impatient deſire of ſeeing his relations at Naples; and the Baron, yielding to his friend's eagerneſs, agreed to ſet out ſooner than Signora Sporza had given Madame de Seidlits reaſon to expect.

Mr. N— would have willingly accompanied them, provided he had been able to prevail on his uncle to go ſo far as Naples. But that gentleman had received ſome letters from England, which made him impatient to return directly; and all the fears which were ſuggeſted by Buchanan being now diſſipated by the marriage of Zeluco to Laura, he rather wiſhed his nephew to remain another ſeaſon in Italy, as he had

been adviſed for the confirmation of his health.

Mr. N— accompanied the Baronet on his way home as far as Florence, and there took his leave of him and Mr. Steele, who had received letters from his mother and Mr. Transfer, preſſing his immediate return in the moſt earneſt terms. Steele, therefore, to the great ſatisfaction of the Baronet, reſolved to accompany him to England; and on the day they left Florence, Mr. N— ſet out on his return to Naples, where Signora Sporza had arrived before him.

Carloſtein and Seidlits had reached that city a conſiderable time before either. On the morning of their arrival, Zeluco had gone to the country with the nobleman whom he had accompanied from Sicily, and was not to return till the day after. Laura determined to paſs that interval with her mother.

Madame de Seidlits was delighted with the thoughts of ſeeing her ſon-in-law, for whom ſhe had always felt the ſincereſt

eſteem

eſteem and friendſhip; and Laura had more happineſs in the expectation of paſſing ſome time with her brother, than in any reflection which had occupied her mind ſince her marriage. She likewiſe experienced a confuſed ſentiment of pleaſure and uneaſineſs, the ſource of which ſhe did not clearly comprehend, in the idea of meeting Carloſtein, who had ſtruck her fancy ſo ſtrongly in her youth that the impreſſion had never ſince been entirely effaced.

Immediately after their arrival at Naples, Captain Seidlits waited on his mother-in-law, with whom he found his ſiſter: when the reciprocal congratulations and compliments were ended, Madame de Seidlits, inquiring what was become of his friend, was told that he had inſiſted on remaining at the inn by himſelf for the firſt day of their meeting at leaſt, that he might be no bar to that domeſtic kind of converſation ſo natural among near relations after a long abſence. "I cannot bear the appearance of your leaving your friend at an inn

the moment you arrive among your relations," ſaid Madame de Seidlits: "we ſhall have abundance of opportunities for domeſtic chat; ſo if you think the Baron can put up with a poor dinner, we had beſt ſend for him." Captain Seidlits, who had with reluctance left his friend to dine alone, heard this propoſal with pleaſure, ſaying, "If that is the only objection, I ſhall certainly endeavour to bring him; for I never knew any man have a greater reliſh for good company, and ſo much indifference for good fare."

This propoſal of her mother's was not heard with perfect tranquillity by Laura; who foreſaw that it would lead to their paſſing the whole evening together; and from what ſhe had remarked of her huſband's temper, ſhe feared that he might not be pleaſed when he came to know, that inſtead of her having paſſed the time of his abſence with her mother only, a young gentleman beſides her brother was of the party; ſhe could not object however without giving a reaſon to her mother,

ther, which ſhe wiſhed to conceal; nor could ſhe, with propriety, withdraw from a company of which her brother, ſo lately arrived, was one.

Captain Seidlits left them, and returned ſoon after with his friend.

The Baron Carloſtein was at this time on the borders of thirty years of age; he was active and genteel in his perſon; he had an open manly countenance, which announced candour and good ſenſe; his converſation and conduct confirmed what his features indicated; his general manner was gentle; yet when provoked, which did not ſlightly happen, his fine blue eyes darted a fire very different from their uſual expreſſion.

When Captain Seidlits preſented him to his ſiſter as an old acquaintance, he was ſtruck with admiration at the improvement which a few years had made in the graces of her face and perſon. Her, whom he recollected only as a lively girl, juſt burſting from childhood, he now beheld a woman in the full bloom of beauty, and

formed by Nature's fineſt ſymmetry, If he found the appearance of Laura more intereſting on account of its alterations, ſhe was the more pleaſed with his, becauſe it remained the ſame.

After dinner Madame de Seidlits, renewing an old ſource of ſportive diſpute, ſaid to her ſon-in-law, "I hope your ſhort ſtay at Rome was ſufficient to convert you from your heretical opinions on the article of female beauty; and you will now confeſs that the fine expreſſive countenances of the Roman ladies are far more intereſting than all the bloom of the Saxon."

Captain Seidlits, however, fought the cauſe of his countrywomen with an intrepidity worthy of a knight-errant. "I will appeal to Baron Carloſtein," ſaid Madame de Seidlits; "his partiality for his country will not blind his judgment nor corrupt his candour—which do you think the fineſt ſtyle of countenance, that of the Italian, or German women?"

"I prefer a mixture of both," replied he, throwing the glance of an inſtant at Laura

"*A vous, ma ſœur,*" ſaid Captain Seidlits, who had accidentally taken up a guitar, the moment before he made this appeal to his ſiſter.

Laura bluſhed at the import of the Baron's anſwer, and was embarraſſed by her brother's direct application of it; ſhe extricated herſelf, however, by ſnatching her guitar out of his hand, ſaying, "*Volontiers, mon frere,*" and inſtantly playing one of his favourite airs.

This turned the converſation; and Laura, who was a very great proficient in muſic, was deſired to play ſeveral pieces on the harpſichord, as well as guitar, which ſhe accompanied with her voice in a manner that would have delighted a far leſs partial audience.

The evening was ſpent with entire ſatiſfaction by Madame de Seidlits and the Captain; Laura's enjoyment was blended with great inquietude; Carloſtein hardly uttered a ſentence, as his friend and he returned to their lodgings, where, pretending to be diſpoſed to ſleep, he retired

immediately to his bed-chamber, and paſſed the night meditating on the accompliſhments of Laura.

Zeluco at his return received the two ſtrangers with politeneſs, and many expreſſions of friendſhip; their appearance and manners attracted the approbation of all to whom they were preſented. He perceived that his connexion with them did himſelf credit, and therefore was unremitting in his attentions, and entertained them with a profuſion of magnificence exceeding what he formerly diſplayed.

Some ſuch motive of ſelfiſhneſs and vanity is the uſual ſource of *oſtentatious* entertainment; friendſhip and cordial goodwill to the gueſts are ſatisfied with mere ſimple preparations for their comfort and conveniency.

As Mr. N—— lived in the greateſt intimacy with Carloſtein and Seidlits, and was highly reſpected by them, he was invited to all thoſe ſplendid feaſts which Zeluco's vanity prompted him to give for the entertainment of his brother-in-law and

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the Baron. Zeluco was alſo aſſiduous in contriving parties of pleaſure for their amuſement; and often accompanied them when they went to viſit the environs of this very intereſting city. He engaged a certain Abbé of diſtinguiſhed taſte in virtù to attend them as their Ciceroné, and explain the antiquities brought from Herculaneum and Pompeia, and the other curioſities collected in the Muſeum at Portici. Madame de Seidlits and her daughter were generally of thoſe parties: but Captain Seidlits, as was already hinted, had not ſo great a reliſh for virtù as either his friend Carloſtein or Mr. N——; nor was he enthuſiaſtically ſtruck with the various natural beauties which adorn the Bay of Naples. Intended from his early youth for the profeſſion of arms, his ſtudies and reflections were pretty much confined to what related to the military art; and he was not ſolicitous of being thought a connoiſſeur in any other. Having honeſtly acknowledged that the Bay of Naples was the moſt beautiful proſpect he had ever

ſeen,

ſeen, he was little diſpoſed to ſay, and as little to hear, any more about it; and when the Abbé began to deſcant on ruins, and lava, and antiques, he left others to profit by the lecture, and walked away humming a march or ſome other favourite air to himſelf. As little could Seidlits ſupport the Abbé's diſſertations on the Roman arms, and their manner of uſing them; although that learned eccleſiaſtic explained thoſe matters with an accuracy and minuteneſs which would have aſtoniſhed one of Cæſar's beſt Centurions. All this learning and eloquence were exhauſted in vain to ſhake the early prejudice which Seidlits had conceived in favour of the firelock and bayonet. He became at length completely ſick of antiquities, and often curſed thoſe everlaſting curioſities, each of which drew a lecture from the Abbé, and were continually croſſing their way, whatever road they took in their excurſions from Naples.

When Laura was of the party, Seidlits was fond of drawing her from the reſt of the company, and converſing with her apart.

apart. And ſhe, although not exactly of her brother's way of thinking on the ſubject of virtù, generally yielded to his ſolicitation. They talked of their acquaintance in Germany; of domeſtic affairs; and ſometimes their converſation turned upon Carloſtein; the virtues of his friend was a ſubject on which Seidlits dwelt with enthuſiaſm; he was eager to enumerate inſtances of his generous nature, and to give proofs of the noble turn of his mind. Laura and Carloſtein were the two people on earth for whom Seidlits had the greateſt eſteem and affection; he was anxious, therefore, that they ſhould eſteem each other; and with this view he was apt to dwell on the praiſes of each to the other. The ſubject was more agreeable to both than he dreamt of.

CHAP. LXIII.

The Highlander.

——Cujus
Dextera per ferrum, pietas ſpectata per ignes.
OVID.

CAPTAIN Seidlits was attended by an elderly man, a native of the North Highlands of Scotland, whoſe name was Duncan Targe. As there is ſomething ſingular in this man's ſtory, and in the accidents by which he came into the Captain's ſervice, it is not foreign to our purpoſe to mention a few of the particulars.

His father, who rented a ſmall portion of land of a nobleman of that country, being upon his death-bed, expreſſed a deſire of ſeeing his maſter; the nobleman went directly to the hut of his tenant, and condoled with him on the melancholy ſtate he ſeemed to be in. "I am greatly indebted

indebted to your Lordſhip," ſaid the dying man, "for the condeſcenſion and kindneſs which you have always ſhewed to me. I am now dying, my Lord, and would willingly leave to ſo good a maſter what I have of the greateſt value in this world."

"I am happy to hear, my good friend," ſaid his Lordſhip, "that you have any thing of value to leave; for I was much afraid that you had loſt the whole or the greateſt part of what you had, when, contrary to my advice, you became ſurety for your relation at Inverneſs; but whatever you have, I muſt inſiſt upon your leaving it all to your little ſon Duncan here; and whatever his portion is, I am more diſpoſed to add to it, than diminiſh it."

"Little Duncan is all I have to leave," replied the poor man; "and the greateſt uneaſineſs I have in dying, is the thought of the deſtitute condition of that poor boy; for my relations at Inverneſs are all ruined by the ſame misfortune which has reduced me. I therefore earneſtly entreat of your

Lordſhip

Lordſhip to accept of this poor orphan, as a pledge of my regard, and the only legacy I have to beſtow."

"I do accept of him with all my heart and ſoul," cried his Lordſhip; "and if he proves as honeſt a man as his father, nothing but death ſhall part him and me."

"Praiſe be to the Almighty," cried the dying man, with uplifted eyes and arms. "Thanks to the gracious God of heaven and earth for all his goodneſs to me and mine!—Oh! my good Lord," continued he, addreſſing the Nobleman, "you have made me a happy man."—Here the ſudden guſh of joy overwhelmed the feeble heart of this poor man; he fell back on his heath pillow, and expired.

The nobleman led the boy home to his caſtle, and after placing him ſome years at ſchool, took him to attend his own perſon. He was in this ſituation when the rebellion broke out in the year 1745; in which his maſter unfortunately taking a part, young Targe, being then a ſtripling of fifteen or ſixteen years of age, accompanied him,

him, and continued inſeparably attached to his Lordſhip after the battle of Culloden during a conſiderable time in which they ſkulked among the moſt remote parts of the Highlands.

On this trying occaſion, Targe, being a youth of a hardy Highland conſtitution and ſpirit, had the ſatisfaction of repaying his maſter for all his former kindneſs by his unſhaken fidelity and grateful attachment. In one or two inſtances he actually ſaved him from ſtarving among the mountains, by bringing him, at the riſk of his own life, proviſions from thoſe places where his Lordſhip could not appear without a certainty of being diſcovered. At length they both eſcaped to the continent, where this unfortunate Nobleman died; after which, Targe was taken into the ſervice of Marſhal Keith, by whom he was recommended to Colonel Seidlits, and now attended his ſon.

Buchanan and Targe generally attended their maſters in their excurſions around Naples. Mr. N—— had remarked an intimacy

timacy between them ever ſince Captain Seidlits and he met at Rome. On perceiving them walking apart from the other ſervants in cloſe converſation together, "I'll lay a bett," ſaid Mr. N—— to Captain Seidlits, "that your ſervant is from Scotland."

"He certainly is originally from that country," replied Seidlits; "but I cannot conceive how you came to diſcover this ſo readily."

"Nay, I ſhould not have diſcovered it," ſaid Mr. N——; "but I was convinced by my ſervant's ſudden and great intimacy with him that *he* had."

Some time after this, Zeluco and his Lady, Madame de Seidlits, Carloſtein, Mr. N——, and Captain Seidlits, went to paſs the day and dine at Portici; neither Buchanan nor Targe had been ordered to attend their maſters on that occacaſion. As the company were returning to town, Captain Seidlits took notice of this accident to Mr. N——; and they amuſed themſelves with various obſervations on

the

the ſource of the great friendſhip which was ſo ſuddenly formed between their two domeſtics. While they were converſing, Mr. N—— ſaw one of his footmen coming at full gallop towards them from Naples. "What is the matter, Dick?" cried Mr. N——.

"Lord! Sir," the man replied, "Captain Seidlits's ſervant, Duncan Targe, has cut poor Mr. Buchanan almoſt to pieces."

"Impoſſible!" cried N——; "what his own countryman?"

"Yes, pleaſe your Honour; they had a quarrel about the Queen; and ſo they fought in the garden with broad ſwords."

"About the Queen!—Nonſenſe!" cried Mr. N——; "what Queen?"

"The Queen of Scotland, pleaſe your Honour," ſaid the ſervant.

"The fellow's certainly mad," ſaid N——. "There is no Queen of Scotland, fool."

"I don't know whether there is or not," replied the ſervant; "but I am ſure that Mr. Buchanan called her a w——; upon which

Mr. Targe called him a liar: ſo they challenged each other; and ſo Mr. Buchanan is deſperately wounded; and ſo I was ordered to come and acquaint your Honour."

Being able to get no better explanation from this meſſenger, Mr. N—— and Captain Seidlits rode on before the reſt of the company; and after proper inveſtigation, were informed of all the particulars of this curious adventure.

CHAP. LXIV.

Dear is that ſhed to which his ſoul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the ſtorms;
And as a child, whom ſcaring ſounds moleſt,
Clings cloſe and cloſer to the mother's breaſt;
So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.

GOLDSMITH.

WHEN the party was arranged for dining at Portici, and Buchanan underſtood that neither he nor his friend Targe were ordered to attend, the former invited his countryman to dine upon hotch potch and minched collops, two Scottiſh diſhes which he had previouſly inſtructed the cook at the inn how to dreſs. The invitation was joyfully accepted by Targe. After dinner, as neither was an enemy to the bottle, they puſhed it pretty briſkly between them, and the converſation became more and more animated every moment;

while they talked of abſent friends, the days of former years, the warlike renown of Scotland, the great men it had produced, and the romantic beauties of the country, they were in perfect uniſon; and when Targe, who had a tolerable voice, ſung the ſongs of Lochaber, Gilderoy, the Laſt Time I came o'er the Muir, and the Flowers of the Foreſt, the ſympathetic tears flowed mutually from their eyes; but with all the prejudices which thoſe two Caledonians had in common, there were ſome articles in which they differed diametrically.

Targe's birth and education have been already mentioned, and his political attachments accounted for; but Buchanan was born and educated among the Whigs of the weſt of Scotland, the deſcendants of the ancient Covenanters, who ſuffered ſo much oppreſſion and religious perſecution by the abſurd policy of the miniſters of Charles the Second, and his brother James, which is ſtill remembered with horror in that part of the country.

His

His father was a farmer, who was at an expence which he could ill afford, by ſupporting him at a neighbouring univerſity for ſeveral years; for the poor man's great ambition was to breed him to the church, or, as he himſelf expreſſed it, to *ſee his ſon George ſhake his head in a pulpit*. But while the youth was proſecuting his ſtudies, the father's hopes were blaſted, and Buchanan's plan of life entirely altered, by the natural conſequence of an illicit connexion he had with a young woman.

This tranſgreſſion being viewed in a more atrocious light in that part of Scotland than in the metropolis of England, and poor Buchanan being threatened at once with the public reprehenſion of the church and the private indignation of his own relations, fled to London, and was kindly received by ſome of his countrymen: in whoſe breaſts compaſſion for the delinquent had greater influence than horror for his crime.

Several attempts for placing him in a more independent way having failed, and

Buchanan being impatient of remaining a burthen on his friends, he accepted an offer of going into the ſervice of the Earl of ——, where he remained ſeveral years, and was afterwards, at the recommendation of Lady Elizabeth, placed with her nephew on his going abroad.

As Buchanan's political ſentiments were ſo different from thoſe of Targe, it would have been fortunate if the two friends had kept clear of any diſcourſe on ſuch ſubjects; but while Buchanan was endeavouring to prove that the city of Naples was inferior in beauty to that of Glaſgow, the view from the Caſtle of Edinburgh far more ſublime than that from the Caſtle of Saint Elmo, and the palace of Caſſerta, though larger, in much worſe taſte than Holyrood Houſe; Targe interrupted him, and remarked with a ſigh, that "it was a thouſand pities that the juſt proprietor of that palace, the lineal deſcendant of ſo many kings, ſhould be obliged to live like a private perſon in Italy."

"It

"It would be a much greater pity," Buchanan remarked, "to ſee popery and arbitrary power eſtabliſhed in Great Britain and Ireland."

"I do not believe there was any danger of either," replied Targe.

"*Your* creed on that ſubject is not goſpel, Mr. Targe," ſaid Buchanan; "in my opinion it was prudent in the nation therefore to ſecure thoſe important points, by the limitations made at the revolution."

"Thoſe limitations," anſwered Targe, "might have been applied to king James and his deſcendants; and the ſame reſtraints which have kept one race of kings within the limits of law, would have kept another."

"There is an eſſential difference between the two caſes," replied Buchanan; "a man will be very happy to accept of a good eſtate to which he has no immediate claim, upon conditions which the poſſeſſor of the eſtate and his poſterity would think it a hardſhip to have forced on them, particularly if they believed the eſtate had been

tranſmitted to them through a long line of anceſtors. And it is natural to ſuppoſe, that the latter would be more apt to break conditions which they conſidered as unjuſt, than the former to deſtroy the ſole foundation of his right; it is therefore wiſe, Mr. Targe, in the Britiſh nation, to adhere to the family it has placed on the throne, as long as they adhere to the conditions on which they were there placed; and I have not heard that any of them ever ſhewed a diſpoſition to infringe them."

"Whatever reaſon the nation had to complain of the father, his deſcendants were innocent," replied Targe; "and if they had a particle of equity or gratitude in their character, they never would have attempted to break through thoſe conditions on which they were replaced on the throne of their anceſtors."

"Why, truly," Mr. Targe, "if ever you heard of any kings who were withheld by mere conſiderations of gratitude or equity from extending their power, or encroaching on the rights of their ſubjects, when

when they thought they could do it with ſafety, you have the advantage of me; and I am apt to believe, that if ever ſuch there were, the edition is now pretty much exhauſted, and not likely to be renewed."

"You ſeem to have a very bad opinion of kings," ſaid Targe.

"I cannot ſay I was ever intimate with either kings or princes," replied Buchanan, "ſo that I can ſay nothing about them from perſonal acquaintance; but from what I have heard of them by word of mouth, and read of them in hiſtory, I muſt confeſs my opinion of them in general is not very favourable."

"I hope you do not think them naturally worſe than other men," added Targe.

"No, Mr. Targe, I certainly do not; but they are ſo accuſtomed from their youth to be flattered and dawted*, to have every thing done for them, and to make ſo few exertions of their own; often ſurrounded by thoſe who have an intereſt in leading them aſtray, and ſometimes by ſuch a

* Indulged.

worthleſs

worthleſs ſet, that if they are not at the beginning naturally better than other men, they run a great riſk of becoming artificially worſe. But be they good, bad, or indifferent, I am clear for the ſubjects keeping ſuch a portion of power in their own hands, as will render it very dangerous for the monarch to make any attempt againſt their rights; and I am clear in another point, Mr. Targe, that when a king is ſuch a gawk* as to fly with his young one into an enemy's land, it would be the height of folly ever to let either the one or the other back to the neſt."

"Well, I cannot help thinking it extremely unjuſt," replied Targe, "to deprive an innocent perſon of his right, and to make him ſuffer ſo ſeverely for the faults of others, if faults there were."

"Unjuſt!" cried Buchanan; "Does not heaven viſit the iniquity of fathers upon their children?"

* Gawk, a Saxon word ſtill uſed in Scotland, ſignifies a cuckow, a ſilly fellow.

"Heaven has a right to do what it pleaſes," ſaid Targe, "but, pleaſe God, I never would take it on *me* to do ſuch a thing, had I the power to-morrow."

"But the thing is done already," ſaid Buchanan, "and cannot be undone, without more fighting about it than the cauſe is worth."

"Many a brave man, not only in Scotland but alſo in England and Ireland, have ſhed their blood in the cauſe of the houſe of Stewart," ſaid Targe.

"I wiſh thoſe who are diſpoſed to ſhed their blood in ſuch a cauſe much good of it," ſaid Buchanan, ſhrugging his ſhoulders; "as for my own part, I ſhall be as ready as my neighbours to fight for my religion or my country, but as for ſhedding one drop of my blood for the difference between one king and another, when the good of the country is no way concerned, I beg to be excuſed."

"Do you not think fighting for your king, is fighting for your country?" ſaid Targe.

"Very

"Very often it is juſt the reverſe," replied Buchanan; "fighting for a bad king, I conſider as fighting againſt my country."

"Yet you muſt acknowledge," reſumed Targe, "that kings reign by the appointment of God; and therefore it ſeems to be a very daring thing in a man to attempt to dethrone them."

"The peſtilence is by the appointment of God," retorted Buchanan; "yet we uſe every means in our power to drive it out of the land."

Targe ſeeming a little diſconcerted and diſpleaſed at this obſervation, Buchanan filled a bumper, and gave for his toaſt, "The Land of Cakes."

This immediately diſperſed the cloud which began to gather on the other's brow.

Targe drank the toaſt with enthuſiaſm, ſaying, "May the Almighty pour his bleſſings on every hill and valley in it!—that is the worſt wiſh, Mr. Buchanan, that I ſhall ever wiſh to that land."

"It

"It would delight your heart to behold the flouriſhing condition it is now in," replied Buchanan; "it was faſt improving when I left it; and I have been credibly informed ſince that, it is now a *perfect garden.*"

"I am very happy to hear it," ſaid Targe.

"Indeed," added Buchanan, "it has been in a ſtate of rapid improvement ever ſince the Union."

"Damn the Union," cried Targe; "it would have improved much faſter without it."

"I am not quite clear on that point, Mr. Targe," ſaid Buchanan.

"Depend upon it," replied Targe, "the Union was the worſt treaty that Scotland ever made."

"I ſhall admit," ſaid Buchanan, "that ſhe might have made a better—but bad as it is, our country reaps ſome advantage from it."

"All the advantages are on the ſide of England."

"What

"What do you think, Mr. Targe," ſaid Buchanan, "of the increaſe of trade ſince the Union, and the riches which have flowed into the Lowlands of Scotland from that quarter?"

"Think," cried Targe; "why, I think they have done a great deal of miſchief to the Lowlands of Scotland."

"How ſo, my good friend?" ſaid Buchanan.

"By ſpreading luxury among the inhabitants, the never-failing forerunner of effeminacy of manners. Why, I was aſſured," continued Targe, "by ſerjeant Lewis Macniel, a Highland gentleman in the Pruſſian ſervice, that the Lowlanders in ſome parts of Scotland are now very little better than ſo many Engliſh."

"O fye!" cried Buchanan, "things are not come to that paſs as yet, Mr. Targe; your friend the ſerjeant aſſuredly exaggerates."

"I hope he does," replied Targe; "but "you muſt acknowledge," continued he, "that by the Union Scotland has loſt her

exiſtence

exiſtence as an independent ſtate; her name is ſwallowed up in that of England: Only read the Engliſh news-papers; they mention England as if it were the name of the whole iſland. They talk of the Engliſh army—the Engliſh fleet—the Engliſh every thing; they never mention Scotland, except when one of our countrymen happens to get an office under government; we are then told with ſome ſtale gibe, that the perſon is a Scotchman; or, which happens ſtill more rarely, when any of them are condemned to die at Tyburn, particular care is taken to inform the public, that the criminal is originally from Scotland: but if fifty Engliſhmen get places or are hanged in one year, no remarks are made."

"No," ſaid Buchanan; "in that caſe it is paſſed over as a thing of courſe."

The converſation then taking another turn, Targe, who was a great genealogiſt, deſcanted on the antiquity of certain gentlemen's families in the Highlands, which he aſſerted were far more honourable than moſt

moſt of the noble families either in Scotland or England. "Is it not ſhameful," added he, "that a parcel of muſhroom Lords, mere ſprouts from the dunghills of law or commerce, the grandſons of grocers and attornies, ſhould take the pas of gentlemen of the oldeſt families in Europe?"

"Why, as for that matter," replied Buchanan, "provided the grandſons of grocers or attornies are deſerving citizens, I do not perceive why they ſhould be excluded from the king's favour more than other men."

"But ſome of them never drew a ſword in defence of either their king or country," rejoined Targe.

"Aſſuredly," ſaid Buchanan, "men may deſerve honour and pre-eminence by other means than by drawing their ſwords. I could name a man who was no ſoldier, and yet did more honour to his country than all the ſoldiers or lords or lairds of the age in which he lived."

"Who was he?"

"The

"The man whoſe name I have the honour to bear," replied the other; "the Great George Buchanan."

"Who? Buchanan the hiſtorian!" cried Targe.

"Ay, the very ſame," replied Buchanan, in a loud voice, being now a little heated with wine, and elevated with vanity, on account of his name. "Why, Sir," continued he, "George Buchanan was not only the moſt learned man, but alſo the beſt poet of his time."

"Perhaps he might," ſaid Targe, coldly.

"Perhaps!" repeated Buchanan; "there is no dubitation in the caſe. Do you remember his deſcription of his own country and countrymen?"

"I cannot ſay I do," replied Targe.

"Then I will give you a ſample of his verſification," ſaid Buchanan, who immediately repeated, with an enthuſiaſtic emphaſis, the following lines from Buchanan's Epithalamium on the marriage of Francis the Dauphin with Mary Queen of Scots.

Illa pharetratis eſt propria gloria Scotis,
Cingere venatu ſaltus, ſuperare natando
Flumina, ferre famem, contemnere frigora & æſtus,
Nec foſſa & muris patriam, ſed marte tueri,
Et ſpreta incolumem vita defendere famam;
Polliciti ſervare fidem, ſanctumque vereri
Numen amicitiæ, mores, non munus amare
Artibus his, totum fremerunt cum bella per orbem,
Nullaque non leges tellus mutaret avitas
Externo ſubjecta jugo, gens una vetuſtis
Sedibus antiqua ſub libertate reſedit.
Subſtitit hic Gothi furor, hic gravis impetus hæſit
Saxonis, hic Cimber ſuperato Saxone, et acri
Perdomito Neuſter Cimbro.——

"I cannot recollect any more."

"You have recollected too much for me," ſaid Targe; "for although I was ſeveral years at an academy in the Highlands, yet I muſt confeſs I am no great Latin ſcholar."

"But the Great Buchanan," ſaid the other, "was the beſt Latin ſcholar in Europe; he wrote that language as well as Livy or Horace."

"I ſhall not diſpute it," ſaid Targe.

"And

"And was over and above a man of the firſt-rate genius," continued Buchanan, with exultation.

"Well, well, all that may be," replied Targe, a little peeviſhly, "but let me tell you one thing, Mr. Buchanan, if he could have ſwopt * one-half of his genius for a little more honeſty, he would have made an advantageous exchange, although he had thrown all his Latin into the bargain."

"In what did he ever ſhew any want of honeſty?" ſaid Buchanan.

"In calumniating and endeavouring to blacken the reputation of his rightful ſovereign, Mary Queen of Scots," replied Targe, "the moſt beautiful and accompliſhed princeſs that ever ſat on a throne."

"I have nothing to ſay either againſt her beauty or her accompliſhments," reſumed Buchanan; "but ſurely, Mr. Targe, you muſt acknowledge that ſhe was a ——?"

* To ſwop is an old Engliſh word ſtill uſed in Scotland, ſignifying to exchange.

"Have a care what you ſay, Sir!" interrupted Targe. "I'll permit no man that ever wore breeches to ſpeak diſreſpectfully of that unfortunate queen."

"No man that ever wore either breeches or a filibeg, *" replied Buchanan, "ſhall prevent me from ſpeaking the truth when I ſee occaſion."

"Speak as much truth as you pleaſe, Sir," rejoined Targe; "but I declare that no man ſhall calumniate the memory of that beautiful and unfortunate princeſs in my preſence, while I can wield a claymore †."

"If you ſhould wield fifty claymores you cannot deny that ſhe was a papiſt," ſaid Buchanan.

"Well, Sir," cried Targe, "what then? She was like other people, of the religion in which ſhe was bred."

* A part of the Highland dreſs which ſerves inſtead of breeches.

† The Highland broad ſword.

"I do

"I do not know where *you* may have been bred, Mr. Targe," ſaid Buchanan; "for aught I know you may be an adherent to the worſhip of the ſcarlet whore yourſelf. I ſhould be glad to have that point cleared up before we proceed farther."

"I cannot ſay that I underſtand your drift, Sir," replied Targe; "but I am an adherent neither of a ſcarlet whore, nor of whores of any other colour."

"If that is the caſe," ſaid Buchanan, "you ought not to intereſt yourſelf in the reputation of Mary Queen of Scots."

"I fear you are too nearly related to the falſe ſlanderer whoſe name you bear," ſaid Targe.

"I glory in the name; and ſhould think myſelf greatly obliged to any man who could prove my relation to the Great George Buchanan," cried the other.

"He was nothing but a diſloyal calumniator," cried Targe, "who attempted to ſupport falſehoods by forgeries; which I thank heaven are now fully detected."

"You are thankful for a very ſmall mercy," reſumed Buchanan; "but ſince you provoke me to it, I will tell you in plain Engliſh, that your bonny Queen Mary was the ſtrumpet of Bothwell, and the murderer of her huſband."

No ſooner had he uttered the laſt ſentence, than Targe flew at him like a tiger; and they were ſeparated with difficulty, by Mr. N——'s groom, who was in the adjoining chamber, and had heard the altercation.

"I inſiſt on your giving me ſatisfaction, or retracting what you have ſaid againſt the beautiful queen of Scotland," cried Targe.

"As for retracting what I have ſaid," replied Buchanan, "that is no habit of mine; but with regard to giving you ſatisfaction, I am ready for that, to the beſt of my ability; for let me tell you, Sir, though I am not a Highlandman, I am a Scotchman as well as yourſelf, and not entirely ignorant of the uſe of the claymore; ſo name your hour, and I will meet you tomorrow morning."

"Why

"Why not directly?" cried Targe; "There is nobody in the garden to interrupt us."

"I ſhould have choſen to have ſettled ſome things firſt; but ſince you are in ſuch a hurry, I will not balk you. I will ſtep home for my ſword, and be with you directly," ſaid Buchanan.

CHAP. LXV.

—Et dulcis moriens reminiſcitur Argos.

THE Groom interpoſed, and endeavoured to reconcile the two enraged Scots, but without ſucceſs. Buchanan ſoon arrived with his ſword, and they retired to a private ſpot in the garden. The Groom next tried to perſuade them to decide their difference by *fair boxing*. This was rejected by both the champions, as a mode of fighting unbecoming gentlemen. The Groom aſſerted that the beſt *gentlemen* in England ſometimes fought in that manner; and gave as an inſtance a boxing match, of which he himſelf had been a witneſs, between Lord G.'s *Gentleman* and a *gentleman*-farmer at York races, about the price of a mare.

"But our quarrel," ſaid Targe, "is about the reputation of a Queen."

"That,

"That, for certain," replied the Groom, "makes a difference."

Buchanan unſheathed his ſword.

"Are you ready, Sir?" cried Targe.

"That I am.—Come on, Sir," ſaid Buchanan; "and the Lord be with the righteous."

"Amen!" cried Targe; and the conflict began.

Both the combatants underſtood the weapon they fought with; and each parried his adverſary's blows with ſuch dexterity, that no blood was ſhed for ſome time; at length Targe making a feint at Buchanan's head, gave him ſuddenly a ſevere wound in the thigh.

"I hope you are now ſenſible of your error," ſaid Targe, dropping his point.

"I am of the ſame opinion I was, cried Buchanan; ſo keep your guard." So ſaying, he advanced more briſkly than ever upon Targe; who, after warding off ſeveral ſtrokes, wounded his antagoniſt a ſecond time. Buchanan, however, ſhewed no diſpoſition to relinquiſh the combat; but

but this ſecond wound being in the fore-head, and the blood flowing with profuſion into his eyes, he could no longer ſee diſtinctly, but was obliged to flouriſh his ſword at random, without being able to perceive the movements of his adverſary, who, cloſing with him, became maſter of his ſword, and with the ſame effort threw him to the ground; and ſtanding over him, he ſaid, "This may convince you, Mr. Buchanan, that your's is not the righteous cauſe; you are in my power, but I will act as the Queen whoſe character I defend would order, were ſhe alive. I hope you will live to repent of the injuſtice you have done to that amiable and unfortunate Princeſs." He then aſſiſted Buchanan to riſe. Buchanan made no immediate anſwer; but when he ſaw Targe aſſiſting the Groom to ſtop the blood which flowed from his wounds, he ſaid, "I muſt acknowledge, Mr. Targe, that you behave like a gentleman."

After the bleeding was in ſome degree diminiſhed by the dry lint, which the Groom,

Groom, who was an excellent farrier, applied to the wounds, they assisted him to his chamber; and then the Groom rode away to inform Mr. N—— of what had happened; but the wound becoming more painful, Targe proposed sending for a surgeon. Buchanan then said, That the surgeon's mate, belonging to one of the ships of the British squadron then in the Bay, was, he believed, on shore; and as he was a Scotsman, he would like to employ him rather than a foreigner. Having mentioned where he lodged, one of Mr. N——'s footmen went immediately for him. He returned soon after, saying, That the surgeon's mate was not at his lodging, nor expected for some hours; "But I will go and bring the French surgeon," continued the Footman.

"I thank you, Mr. Thomas," said Buchanan; "but I will have patience till my own countryman returns."

"He may not return for a long time," said Thomas. "You had best let me run for

for the French ſurgeon, who they ſay has a great deal of ſkill."

"I am much obliged to you, Mr. Thomas," added Buchanan; "but neither Frenchman nor Spaniſhman ſhall dreſs my wounds when a Scottiſhman is to be found, for love or money."

"They are to be found for the one or the other, as I am credibly informed, in moſt parts of the world," ſaid Thomas.

"As *my* countrymen," replied Buchanan, "are diſtinguiſhed for letting ſlip no means of improvement, it would be very ſtrange if many of them did not uſe that of travelling," Mr. Thomas.

"It would be very ſtrange, indeed! I own it," ſaid the Footman.

"But are you certain of this young man's ſkill in his buſineſs when he does come?" ſaid Targe.

"I confeſs I have had no opportunity to know any thing of his ſkill," anſwered Buchanan; "but I know for certain that he is ſprung from very reſpectable people.

His

His father is a Miniſter of the Goſpel; and it is not likely that his father's ſon will be deficient in the profeſſion to which he was bred."

"It would be ſtill leſs likely had the ſon been bred to preaching," ſaid Targe.

"That is true," replied Buchanan; "but I have no doubt of the young man's ſkill; he ſeems to be a very *douce* * lad; it will be an encouragement to him to ſee that I prefer him to another, and alſo a comfort to me to be attended by my countryman."

"Countryman or not countryman," ſaid Thomas, "he will expect to be paid for his trouble as well as another."

"Aſſuredly," ſaid Buchanan; "but it was always a maxim with me, and ſhall be to my dying day, that we ſhould give our own fiſh-guts to our own ſea-mews."

"Since you are ſo fond of your own ſea-mews," ſaid Thomas, "I am ſurpriſed

* Douce, a Scottiſh expreſſion, meaning gentle and well-diſpoſed.

you

you were ſo eager to deſtroy Mr. Targe there."

"That proceeded from a difference in politics, Mr. Thomas," replied Buchanan, "in which the beſt of friends are apt to have a miſunderſtanding; but though I am a Whig and he is a Tory, I hope we are both honeſt men: and as he behaved generouſly when my life was in his power, I have no ſcruple in ſaying, that I am ſorry for having ſpoken diſreſpectfully of any perſon, dead or alive, for whom he has an eſteem."

"Mary Queen of Scots acquired the eſteem of her very enemies," reſumed Targe; "the elegance and engaging ſweetneſs of her manners were irreſiſtible to every heart that was not ſteeled by prejudice or jealouſy."

"She is now in the hands of a Judge," ſaid Buchanan, "who can neither be ſeduced by fair appearances, nor impoſed on by forgeries and fraud."

"She

"She is ſo, Mr. Buchanan," replied Targe, "and her rival and accuſers are in the hands of the ſame Judge."

"We had beſt leave them all to his juſtice and mercy then, and ſay no more on the ſubject," added Buchanan; "for if Queen Mary's conduct on earth was what you believe it was, ſhe will receive her reward in heaven, where her actions and ſufferings are recorded."

"One thing more I will ſay," rejoined Targe; "and that is only to aſk of you, Whether it is probable that a woman, whoſe conſcience was loaded with the crimes imputed to her, could have cloſed the varied ſcene of her life, and have met death with ſuch ſerene and dignified courage, as Mary did?"

"I always admired that laſt awful ſcene," replied Buchanan, who was melted by the recollection of Mary's behaviour on the ſcaffold; "and I will freely acknowledge, that the moſt innocent perſon that ever lived, or the greateſt hero recorded in hiſtory, could not face death with greater

compoſure than the Queen of Scotland; ſhe ſupported the dignity of a Queen, while ſhe diſplayed the meekneſs of a Chriſtian."

"I am exceedingly ſorry, my dear friend, for the miſunderſtanding that happened between us," ſaid Targe affectionately, and holding forth his hand in token of reconciliation; "and I am now willing to believe, that your friend Mr. George Buchanan was a very great poet, and underſtood Latin as well as any man alive."

Here the two friends ſhook hands with the utmoſt cordiality; but Targe, obſerving that Buchanan's face ſeemed a little pale, and that the wound in his thigh bled profuſely through the dreſſings, begged that he would allow ſome other ſurgeon to be brought; and Mr. N——'s footman ſwore, if he did not he would certainly bleed to death.

Buchanan having rebuked Thomas for ſwearing, added, "You know, or at leaſt ought to know, Thomas, that let him bleed as he pleaſes, no man can die till his time

is come; but even if I were to die of this wound, I ſhould be ſorry that the laſt act of my life was that of preferring a foreigner not only to a countryman, but to one born in the ſame pariſh with myſelf, which this young man was. As for Mr. Targe here, I take you to witneſs, that I declare him innocent, happen what may." As he pronounced theſe words, the young ſurgeon, who had been ſo long expected, entered the chamber, and having examined Buchanan's wounds, and made proper applications, he ſtrongly enjoined his patient to keep quietly in his room for ſome time, without attempting to walk, otherwiſe the wound in his thigh would be very tedious in healing; and there might even be ſome riſk of a fever. And the patient agreeing to follow his injunctions, the ſurgeon promiſed him a ſpeedy cure.

Mr. N—— and Captain Seidlits heard with ſatisfaction the prognoſtic of the ſurgeon; and were equally aſtoniſhed and entertained when they were informed of the cauſe and circumſtances of this quarrel.

CHAP. LXVI.

— Placet impares
Animos ſub juga ahenea
Mittere. HOR.

THAT courſe of diſſipation in which Laura was involved for a conſiderable time after the arrival of her brother and Carloſtein was by no means agreeable to the natural turn of her mind, yet it certainly was of ſervice to her in her preſent ſituation. An unremitting ſucceſſion of balls, aſſemblies, operas, and other public entertainments, however they may be oppreſſive to thoſe who enjoy domeſtic happineſs, are relaxations from domeſtic miſery.

The diſpoſitions of Zeluco and of Laura ſcarcely touched in a ſingle point; it was impoſſible therefore that there could be any cordial adheſion or agreement between them:

them: he was vain and oſtentatious, ſhe modeſt; he was diſſembling, ſhe open; he was malicious, ſhe candid: ſome of his pleaſures were of ſo groſs a nature that the mere mention of them was ſhocking to her; the gentle affections of the heart, the emotions of filial affection, the glow of friendſhip, the effuſions of gratitude, and meltings of compaſſion, which alternately delighted and afflicted, but always occupied the feeling ſoul of Laura, were ſentiments of which Zeluco had hardly any idea.

Neither did the moſt ſublime beauties of nature, the moſt exquiſite imitations of art, or the works of genius of any kind, to all of which ſhe was feelingly alive, afford any enjoyment to the mind of Zeluco; although from vanity and affectation he pretended to admire ſome of them, and had made himſelf maſter of the common cant of *virtù*. Zeluco, in ſhort, had no taſte in common with Laura; ſo that this ill-aſſorted pair could not carry on a converſation intereſting to both on any one ſubject. It is true, Laura had *never* liked him; all that

Father Pedro had reported in his favour, joined to the good opinion of her mother, were not ſufficient to overcome the bad impreſſion ſhe had early received of Zeluco; but till ſhe actually became his wife, ſhe could form no adequate notion of a character whoſe depravity developed to her abhorring heart more and more every hour.

As ſoon as Laura's beauty had become familiar, and of courſe began to pall on the jaded ſenſes of Zeluco, ſhe loſt, in his eyes, the only attraction ſhe had ever poſſeſſed; for he was incapable of deriving ſatisfaction from any of her numerous accompliſhments, and the purity of her mind equally abominated his converſation and his taſtes. He ſought in venal beauty, and in variety, the pleaſure which he no longer had in the chaſte charms of Laura: the conſequence of this purſuit was, tedious intervals of *enui*, and its never-failing companion ill-humour; for what he intended to mitigate was found to irritate the evil that oppreſſed him. Wretched himſelf,

himſelf, he could not ſupport the ſight of the happineſs of others, and particularly nothing provoked him ſo much as the idea of his wife's being in a ſtate of compoſure, while he felt himſelf tormented with malignant paſſions; and he often endeavoured to exhauſt the virulence which corroded his own breaſt upon the unhappy Laura, who, before her marriage, had never known but from deſcription, what envy or ill-humour were.

Hard, however, and painful to ſupport as his ill-humours were, it appeared not ſo diſguſting to Laura as the fits of fondneſs for her with which he was occaſionally ſeized; and ſuch was the unſupportable caprice of the man, that his fondneſs was ſometimes diſplayed immediately after having inſulted her with the moſt unprovoked ill-uſage. On thoſe occaſions he was an object of horror to her, and had what ſhe ſuffered been known, this beautiful woman, who ſhone at every public place of entertainment in all the brilliancy

of diamonds and of equipage, would have been an object of universal compassion.

In the mean time, the opportunities which Carlostein daily had of seeing and conversing with Laura, convinced him that the beauty and elegance of her face and person were equalled by her good sense and other mental accomplishments. She, on her part, thought him the most engaging of men, and felt a warmer approbation of him than of any other man whose good qualities had ever before attracted her esteem. She was conscious of a real friendship for Mr. N——, and had the highest opinion of the worth of his character; but the sentiments which she now experienced for Carlostein were of a still more interesting nature. When Mr. N—— visited her, she was pleased the moment she saw him enter the room; but if he did not come when expected, the disappointment did not so far affect the natural cheerfulness of her temper, as to prevent her from enjoying other company. But if the same happened

with

with reſpect to Carloſtein, if any accident prevented his coming when there was reaſon to expect him, her real cheerfulneſs fled, and nothing but an affected ſubſtitute remained with her for the reſt of the evening.

Alarmed at this, and ſenſible of the impropriety of an attachment which was gradually gaining upon her: "Ah! let me baniſh this man from my thoughts," ſaid ſhe often to herſelf; "let me remember that I am the wife of another."—This immediately brought the image of that other before her mind's eye, in all the deformity of vice; and the contraſt was ſo ſtriking, and ſo much in favour of him whom ſhe thought it a duty to forget, that he was preſſed nearer to her heart by the very efforts ſhe made to remove him.

After remaining ſeveral months at Naples, and ſeldom paſſing a day without being in company with Laura, Carloſtein had not ventured to give a hint of his paſſion, but had endeavoured to conceal it from her, and the reſt of the world, as much as he

could: while ſhe, on her part, behaved with ſuch circumſpection, that neither her mother, brother, Signora Sporza, nor any other acquaintance, had an idea of her having any particular attachment to Carloſtein. Even Zeluco, though curſed with a jealous temper, ever on the watch, and convinced that he never had poſſeſſed the affections of his wife, harboured no particular ſuſpicion of Carloſtein.

How well ſo ever Laura and Carloſtein ſucceeded in concealing their ſentiments from the reſt of the world, they failed with regard to each other. Laura had too much penetration not to perceive that ſhe occupied the attention of Carloſtein in an uncommon degree; and ſhe ſometimes remarked this on occaſions when a leſs acute or leſs intereſted obſerver would have been apt to think that ſhe engaged his attention leſs than any other perſon in company. While his behaviour to her, in the eyes of others, appeared uniform and unvaried, becauſe it was always reſpectful; *ſhe* perceived a variety of ſhades in his conduct

in

in her preſence, which depended, in ſome degree, on the company preſent, yet always harmoniſed with the humour ſhe ſeemed to be in.

The ſex in general are very penetrating on this ſubject, and it rarely happens that a man is ſincerely in love with a woman, without his paſſion's being known to her before he is fully convinced of it himſelf. Notwithſtanding, therefore, that Carloſtein had never ſaid a ſyllable on the ſubject of love to Laura, nor had preſumed to indicate any ſuch ſentiment by his looks, or in any particular deviated from that delicacy of behaviour due to a woman of virtue; ſhe was as fully convinced of his attachment to her, perhaps more, than if he had made a ſolemn and earneſt declaration of it.

It is more than probable, that Carloſtein had ſome idea alſo that he was not an object of indifference to her, for, although there are accounts of ladies who, while they are paſſionately fond of their lovers, make them believe, for years together, that they

they could not endure them, it muſt be acknowledged that theſe examples are oftner found in romances than in life, and when found in real life they afford a ſtronger proof of the lady's pride and the lover's paſſion, than of the good ſenſe of either. For our behaviour, in all reſpects, from things of the greateſt importance to trifles, is, in ſpite of ourſelves, different to thoſe who engage our affections, from what it is to every other perſon; and the very effort to behave in the ſame manner to the beloved object as to others, diſcovers to an acute obſerver what is meant to be concealed; for although love is often ſimulated by thoſe who have it not, it is more difficult to conceal it where it really exiſts: Carloſtein, therefore, ought not to be accuſed of vanity or preſumption, in flattering himſelf with no common ſhare of the good opinion of Laura.

But he was not more fully convinced of her partiality for himſelf, than of her diſlike to her huſband; which Laura endeavoured with equal care and as little ſucceſs

to hide. Such, however, was his veneration for the character of Laura, that he preſumed as little from the certainty of the latter as from his conviction of the former; indeed, he could hardly allow himſelf to wiſh for a ſucceſs which he could not enjoy but at the expence of the future peace of mind of the perſon he loved; and if he ever permitted himſelf to ſuppoſe that the woman he ſo greatly admired might have a moment of weakneſs, ſuch was his notion of her diſpoſition and principles, that he was convinced it would be followed by everlaſting remorſe on her part, and of courſe by miſery on his; for he could not hope that all her partiality for him, or all the ſophiſtry he could uſe, would perſuade a woman of real virtue and dignity to live in a manner inconſiſtent with both.

If, in conſequence of theſe reflexions, Carloſtein had withdrawn himſelf entirely from a connection of ſuch a dangerous tendency, he would no doubt have acted a more prudent part;—but having no delight

equal

equal to that of converſing with Laura, no wiſh on leaving her company but that of meeting her again, the effort was above his power;—all he could do was to endeavour to hide a paſſion which he was unable to ſubdue.

CHAP. LXVII.

Il n'y a point de déguiſement qui puiſſe long-temps cacher l'amour où il eſt, ne le feindre où il n'eſt pas.
ROCHEFOUCAULT.

IT is not improbable that the ſentiments which Carloſtein and Laura mutually entertained for each other would have been diſcovered by Zeluco, had not his ſuſpicions been fixed on another object; for notwithſtanding the candid behaviour of his wife, when he ſpoke to her concerning the Nobleman, as was mentioned above, the ſparks of jealouſy in Zeluco's breaſt had never been entirely extinguiſhed, but were rekindled more fiercely than ever on the return of that Nobleman from Rome.

As Laura now appeared at all public places, he had frequent opportunities of accoſting

accoſting her; and although ſhe received his compliments with an air of great reſerve, yet he omitted no occaſion of addreſſing her.

One evening in particular, at a very numerous aſſembly, Laura being in company with Signora Sporza, her huſband, her brother, and Carloſtein; this Nobleman no ſooner ſaw her than he made up to Zeluco's party, and as uſual directed his whole aſſiduity to Laura. Zeluco obſerved this with *ſtifled* rage, and *apparent* good-humour; Laura alone diſcovered the hurricane in his heart through all the ſunſhine of his countenance.—She roſe to withdraw—the Nobleman offered his hand—ſhe ſeeming not to obſerve his motion, turned to her huſband, who deſired Carloſtein to hand her to her carriage. She immediately preſented her hand to him, and the Nobleman ſeized it.—"I believe, Signor," ſaid Carloſtein, "the lady intended me the honour."—At that inſtant Laura withdrawing her hand from the other, to prevent farther diſpute, took hold

of

of Zeluco's arm, begging him to accompany her to her carriage, which he did, and drove home.

When the aſſembly broke up, as the Nobleman preſſed acroſs the Corridor in ſome hurry towards his carriage, his legs were for a moment croſſed by the ſword of Carloſtein, who inſtantly looſened it from his belt, making an apology; the other, without paying any regard to this, puſhed forward, ſaying, in an imperious tone, "Make way, Sir."—"Make you way, Sir," cried Carloſtein, provoked at his inſolence, and puſhing him to one ſide. The Nobleman drew and made a paſs at Carloſtein, whoſe ſword being in his hand, he put aſide the thruſt, and returning it, hit his antagoniſt ſmartly near the eye with the point of the undrawn ſword, and with a jerk threw the Nobleman's ſword quite out of his hand.

Carloſtein then walked calmly to his own carriage, where he found Signora Sporza and Captain Seidlits, who, inſtead of going directly to Zeluco's, where they were to

ſup, propoſed driving a little to enjoy the refreſhing breeze from the bay, to which Carloſtein aſſented, without ſaying a word of what had juſt happened.

Meanwhile one of Zeluco's ſervants having heard an imperfect account of the ſquabble, haſtily entered the room where Madame de Seidlits, Laura, and Zeluco were, telling them, That the Nobleman and Carloſtein had fought, that one of them was deſperately wounded, and the other killed on the ſpot.

"Which of them is killed?" ſaid Zeluco.

"I cannot tell," ſaid the ſervant; "all I know for certain is, that one of them is dead."

"Go and learn which blockhead," cried Zeluco.

As the ſervant went out, Carloſtein entered with Signora Sporza and Captain Seidlits; but Laura's ſpirits had undergone ſuch painful agitation from the ſervant's intelligence, that after ſtruggling for ſome time to hide her emotion, ſhe ſuddenly fainted,

fainted, and fell from her chair. Being carried to bed, ſhe continued greatly diſordered, and even after her mother had acquainted her with the true ſtate of the caſe, which ſhe did as ſoon as ſhe was herſelf informed of it, Laura was not able to ſtir abroad for near a week.

Laura having fainted juſt as Carloſtein appeared, Zeluco's jealous temper, ever ready to put the worſt conſtruction on the moſt innocent occurrence, imputed her being ſo violently affected to her ſuſpecting from the ſervant's account that the Nobleman was the perſon killed, and her being confirmed in that ſuſpicion when ſhe ſaw Carloſtein enter the room in good health.

This very idea was a ſufficient reaſon to render Zeluco fonder than ever of Carloſtein's company; he invited him very frequently to his houſe, becauſe he thought that his preſence was highly diſagreeable to his wife; and this idea ſeemed the more probable, as Laura, being conſcious of the real cauſe of her fainting, was evidently

more conſtrained and embarraſſed in his company than ſhe had formerly been; all which Zeluco imputed to her averſion to that gentleman on account of his quarrel with the Nobleman.

He was confined to his room for ſeveral weeks with an inflammation which came on his eye, and ſome of his friends were imprudent enough to vapour a little about his determination of calling Carloſtein to an account as ſoon as he was fully recovered. Carloſtein, who was of a cool temper, took no notice of theſe, being reſolved to regulate his conduct by the behaviour of the Nobleman himſelf, and not by that of his officious friends; but Captain Seidlits, who was of a more fiery diſpoſition, did not behave with the ſame moderation.

In a company where the Captain was, the converſation turned on the quarrel; a friend of the Nobleman's gave a repreſentation of it more favourable for him than was conſiſtent with truth: "I am convinced," ſaid Seidlits, "you have not received

ceived that account of the matter from the Nobleman himſelf, for he knows that it happened very differently." —" Do you not allow," ſaid the other, " that the Baron's ſword was in the ſcabbard?"—" I do," replied Seidlits.—" It was highly inſulting then," ſaid the other, " to make uſe of it in that ſtate; why did he not draw it?"—" It was a preſent from the king, his maſter," replied Seidlits; " my friend has a high value for that ſword, and does not like to draw it on *ſlight* occaſions." Here, contrary to the expectation of ſome of the company, the converſation dropped; but it was afterwards repeated to Laura.

The next time ſhe ſaw her brother, ſhe blamed him for making ſo haughty an anſwer; adding, that it might have bad conſequences.—" I am ſorry to have done what you diſapprove of, my dear ſiſter," ſaid Seidlits; " but as for the conſequences, I regard them not, and I am ſure Carloſtein regards them as little as I do."

Signora Sporza, who with Mr. N—— was the only other perſon preſent, obſerved to Seidlits, That he might, if he pleaſed, deſpiſe the open reſentment of a fair enemy, but he would do well to remember, that in the country where they were, there was a mode of avenging injuries which his friend Carloſtein ought to be on his guard againſt otherwiſe than by relying on courage alone. She hinted at the ſame time, that there was a greater riſk of a vengeance of the latter kind from the Nobleman and his relations, than of that which Captain Seidlits ſeemed ſo much to deſpiſe.

Laura left the room abruptly when this remark was made, but not before Signora Sporza obſerved her change colour, and appear greatly agitated. This was the firſt time that Signora Sporza had any ſuſpicion of Laura's partiality for Carloſtein; Mr. N—— had conceived ſome notion of it a few days before, from an incident not worth mentioning, and which would have eſcaped the obſervation perhaps of any other

other perſon. He found a pretext for withdrawing ſoon after Laura left the room; and upon her return, Signora Sporza was confirmed in her ſuſpicions, for in ſpite of the pains which Laura had taken to waſh away the traces of tears, it was plain ſhe had been crying.

CHAP. LXVIII.

Nam tibi cum facie mores natura pudicos,
Et raras dotes ingeniumque dedit. OVID.

THE words which had fallen from Signora Sporza, concerning the reſentment of the Nobleman who had been hurt by Carloſtein, and the mode of revenge he might adopt, made a laſting impreſſion on Laura. She thought Carloſtein in the greateſt danger of being ſecretly murdered, if he were not openly called to the field; ſhe conſidered herſelf as the original cauſe of the hazard to which he was expoſed, and which ſhe feared was increaſed by the imprudence of her brother: her imagination dwelt on the horrors that might enſue.

Zeluco one evening ſaid to her, that he had an inclination to go the following day to Puzzoli, and to croſs the bay between that

that town and Baia; and as ſhe had expreſſed a deſire to ſee the Ponte di Caligula, the baths of Nero, the tomb of Agrippina, and the other ruins of that ſeat of ancient luxury, he would take her with him. Laura aſſented. But going to bed with her thoughts brooding over the ſame train of reflections which had infeſted her mind for ſome days paſt, ſhe dreamt of bravos and aſſaſſination the whole night. She ſometimes thought ſhe beheld Carloſtein ſtretched on the ground, pale and bloodleſs;—at other times the blood ſeemed to flow from a recent wound in his ſide; and as often as ſhe ſtooped to lend him aſſiſtance, ſhe imagined that her huſband prevented her by terrifying looks and inſulting language. Thoſe viſions diſordered her ſo much, that ſhe reſolved next morning to decline the propoſed jaunt to Puzzoli.

Some time after ſhe aroſe, Zeluco ſent her word, that Captain Seidlits and he waited for her at breakfaſt. The Captain had accidentally called earlier than uſual;

and as ſoon as his ſiſter entered the room, he told her, that he and Carloſtein intended to accompany Zeluco and her to Baia. Laura endeavoured to excuſe herſelf. "What is the matter now," ſaid Zeluco; "you had no objection laſt night!" She ſtill wiſhed to decline going; but Zeluco ſuſpecting that her only reaſon was becauſe Carloſtein was of the party, determined that ſhe *ſhould* go. He and Laura went in the carriage accordingly, Seidlits and Carloſtein accompanying them on horſeback. After wandering ſome time along this beautiful coaſt, Zeluco told Seidlits, he would lead him to ſee ſomething peculiarly curious; but as it was at ſome diſtance, and difficult of acceſs, he begged of Carloſtein to remain with Laura till their return.

Seidlits agreed to the propoſal, becauſe he thought it would be agreeable to his ſiſter to be entertained during this interval by his friend: Zeluco made it, becauſe he thought it would be in the higheſt degree diſagreeable to her; Laura heard it with ſurpriſe, and Carloſtein with pleaſure.

When

When Zeluco and the Captain left them, they walked ſlowly on without conſidering where they went, and without exchanging a word, till they arrived at a ſhady ſeat, from which the various beauties around might be ſeen to advantage;—here Carloſtein expreſſed a fear that ſhe was fatigued with walking. She immediately ſat down, and he placed himſelf at her ſide.

Carloſtein and Laura, thus unexpectedly ſeated together, ſeemed entirely abſorbed in reflection, and as regardleſs of the ſublime and luxurious ſcene before their eyes, as if they had been blind; their mutual conſtraint was ſo great, that neither was capable of expreſſing a diſtinct idea. Carloſtein made ſeveral efforts to begin a converſation, which proceeded no farther than one unintereſting queſtion and anſwer; Laura had been ſo terrified with the dreams of the preceding night, that ſhe could think or ſpeak of nothing but what *they* ſuggeſted. The careleſs and blunt temper of her brother diſquieted her very much; and ſhe greatly

greatly dreaded ſome miſchief from that quarter.

"I fear, Sir," ſaid ſhe, making a great effort to break the ſilence, and forcing a ſmile, as if the fear ſhe expreſſed had not been ſerious; "I fear you have an imprudent friend in my brother."

"Madam!" cried Carloſtein, with ſurpriſe.

Laura repeated what ſhe had ſaid.

"I conſider your brother," replied Carloſtein, "as the moſt valuable friend that ever man had. I owe my life to him."

"Nay," reſumed ſhe, "I have no deſign to make a breach between you; but my brother has ſometimes a thoughtleſs and provoking way of ſpeaking, which may lead to very bad conſequences, and of which it is the duty of a friend to warn him."

"I do not conceive," ſaid Carloſtein, "to what you allude."

"Nothing,"

"Nothing," reſumed ſhe, "rankles more in the heart than contemptuous expreſſions."

"Unqueſtionably," anſwered he.

"Nor," added ſhe, "is there any kind of injury more apt to provoke men to revenge."

"I am convinced of it," ſaid Carloſtein, unable to gueſs to what ſhe alluded.

"Then ſurely," continued Laura, with heſitation, "it was imprudent in my brother to ſpeak as I hear he did on a late occaſion."

"I am convinced you labour under ſome miſtake, Madam," ſaid Carloſtein. "Captain Seidlits, although as fearleſs as any man alive, is not apt to give wanton provocation."

"I was told," ſaid Laura, "that converſing lately on the unfortunate ſcuffle in which you were involved, he uſed terms which might drive your antagoniſt to meaſures he otherwiſe would not think of."

"The accident which happened in conſequence of that fooliſh affair," ſaid Carloſtein, "he who gave the firſt provocation

tion brought on himſelf; Captain Seidlits knows that nobody elſe was to blame, and I dare ſay he will aſſert this as often as the affair is talked of."

"But why irritate him with contemptuous expreſſions? perhaps he might become ſenſible he is in the wrong. What my brother ſays may be carried to him, and excite him to meaſures which otherwiſe he would not think of adopting."

"What meaſure he may chuſe to adopt, it is his buſineſs to weigh with attention," ſaid Carloſtein; "but certainly is not worth Captain Seidlits' conſideration."

"Friendſhip," ſaid Laura, "might make him conſider, that contemptuous language may ſtimulate to a mode of revenge which no degree of courage can obviate, and no ſkill can ward off." She ſpoke theſe words with agitation, and the tear trembled in her eye: then recollecting the import of what ſhe was ſaying, her face was inſtantly ſuffuſed with bluſhes; yet muſtering up all the woman within her, and endeavouring to conceal the true ſource of her concern, ſhe

ſhe added, "He does not think on the remorſe and miſery *he himſelf would feel*, ſhould his imprudence be attended with any fatal conſequence to——." Here perceiving that her voice faultered, her embarraſſment increaſed; ſhe heſitated, and was incapable of uttering a diſtinct word.

It was hardly poſſible for Carloſtein not to ſee the real motive of her concern and embarraſſment; whatever ſatisfaction he might have in the diſcovery, he had too much delicacy to ſeem to perceive either.—"Your brother's friendſhip," ſaid he, "has ever been a ſource of happineſs to me; I ſhould reckon myſelf unfortunate indeed, if it ſhould ever become a cauſe of uneaſineſs to him, and will uſe every precaution to prevent ſuch an effect, of which, however, I think there is no danger."

Laura gently bowed her head, by way of thanking him; for, although ſomewhat recovered from her perplexity by Carloſtein's reply, ſhe was ſtill afraid to truſt her voice with words. She then roſe, and after they had walked a little way without

ſpeaking,

ſpeaking, Carloſtein began to point out ſome of the moſt ſtriking beauties of the landſcape in their view; and ſhe aſſented to his remarks in a manner that evinced how very little they occupied her thoughts. At length, ſeeing Captain Seidlits and Zeluco approaching, they moved in ſilence to meet them.

The latter obſerving the reſerved manner in which Laura and Carloſtein advanced, concluded that their *tête-à-tête* had been as diſagreeable as he intended it ſhould; and the melancholy air which Laura retained, in ſpite of all her efforts to ſeem cheerful, he imputed to diſpleaſure for having been left with Carloſtein.

Replete with this notion, Zeluco let ſlip no occaſion, while they remained at the inn where they dined, of ſaying things which he thought would vex and diſconcert his wife, without being perceived by Carloſtein or Seidlits.

"Has any one heard how his eye is to-day?" ſaid he, naming the perſon with whom Carloſtein had the quarrel.

"I heard,"

"I heard," ſaid Seidlits, "that it ſtill continues ſwelled and inflamed."

"I am told he runs ſome riſk of loſing it altogether," ſaid Zeluco, looking maliciouſly at Laura.

"I hope not," ſaid Laura, naturally, and without obſerving the manner in which he had ſpoken.

"Would it give you a *great deal* of pain, Madam?" rejoined he.

"I ſhould certainly be concerned that ſuch a misfortune happened to any body," replied ſhe, "particularly on ſuch an occaſion."

"You will never be forgiven by the ladies, Signor," ſaid Zeluco, addreſſing Carloſtein, "for ſpoiling this fine ſpark's ogling."

The venom of jealouſy in Zeluco's breaſt was put into a ferment by Laura's anſwers, natural and mild as they were. When the company were preparing to return, "Be ſo obliging, Signor," ſaid he to Carloſtein, "as to take my ſeat in the carriage, and

let me have your horſe; I ſhould like to *ride* to town."

This obliging huſband made the propoſal with no other view than that of diſtreſſing his wife.—Laura's heart beat tumultuouſly when ſhe heard it; the agitation which ſhe had felt during the converſation ſhe had juſt had with Carloſtein, on which ſhe already had made ſome reflections, added to the glow of joy ſhe was conſcious of, on hearing her huſband's propoſal, determined this virtuous woman to evade it;—turning from Carloſtein therefore to Captain Seidlits, "I have ſomething particular to communicate to you, brother," ſaid ſhe, holding forth her hand; "I beg you will favour me with your company in the carriage."

"With pleaſure," cried Seidlits, taking his ſiſter's hand. "Your wife and I have had a quarrel," added he to Zeluco, "and I ſee ſhe wiſhes for an opportunity to make it up." So ſaying, he went with her into the carriage, leaving Carloſtein diſappointed, and Zeluco ready to burſt with anger.

Whatever

Whatever ſelf-approbation Laura felt from this victory of her reaſon over her inclination, yet when ſhe obſerved the deſponding look of Carloſtein as the carriage paſſed him, her heart whiſpered, that if Zeluco ſhould renew his propoſal, ſhe ought not to provoke him by a ſecond refuſal. She was not put to the temptation. The carriage moved on, and her brother was obliged to aſk her oftener than once, what ſhe had to communicate to him, before he was able to rouſe her from the reverie in which her thoughts were abſorbed, when the carriage proceeded to town.

Zeluco having invited the two gentlemen to ſup at his houſe, where they met with Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza, he could not give vent to the anger which he had ſo abſurdly conceived againſt his wife, but aſſumed the appearance of good humour and extraordinary affection for her. Laura was too much accuſtomed to him to be his dupe on this occaſion. She ſaw clearly into the real ſtate of his thoughts, and being quite con-

vinced of his rancour, ſhe, who herſelf was all candour, was ſo ſhocked at his affected kindneſs, that in ſpite of her unwillingneſs to give her mother uneaſineſs, ſhe could not remain with the company, but was obliged to leave them abruptly on the pretext of ill health.

Madame de Seidlits had intended to remain that night with her daughter, but being at that time in a delicate ſtate of health herſelf, ſhe was prevailed on to return to her own houſe, upon Signora Sporza's offering to ſtay all night with Laura. This was infinitely agreeable to the latter, who wiſhed to be ſecured from the company of her huſband.

CHAP. LXIX.

No more can faith or candour move;
But each ingenuous deed of love,
  Which reaſon would applaud,
Now, ſmiling o'er his dark diſtreſs,
Fancy malignant ſtrives to dreſs
  Like injury and fraud. AKENSIDE.

ZELUCO retained all his hatred to Signora Sporza, though he thought it expedient to let it lie dormant for the preſent, and to behave to her with the attention due to a relation of his wife's family. She ſaw through his diſſimulation, and repaid his hatred with a fixed averſion; but this ſhe carefully concealed from Madame de Seidlits, becauſe ſhe knew that it would give her uneaſineſs. Signora Sporza's affection for Laura was increaſed by her perceiving that ſhe was unhappy in her marriage; and perhaps by being convinced

that ſhe entertained the ſame ſentiments of Zeluco with herſelf. She did not take the ſame pains therefore to conceal her ſentiments from Laura that ſhe did from Madame de Seidlits. Laura, however, would underſtand none of her hints, and diſcouraged all converſation on that ſubject.

Signora Sporza ſaw the true motive of her young friend's reſerve; and notwithſtanding that it would have been agreeable to herſelf to have talked freely of Zeluco's behaviour and character, yet ſhe could not help approving of Laura's prudence in declining all converſation on ſuch a delicate ſubject. She beheld with more concern that Laura was ſinking into dejection of ſpirits; and although ſhe ſtrongly ſuſpected her partiality for Carloſtein, as well as his paſſion for her, ſo far from conſidering this as an aggravation of Laura's miſfortune, ſhe thought an attachment of this kind might prove a ſalutary antidote againſt the gloomy deſpondency, or even deſpair, with which her young friend was threatened.

With

With regard to Signora Sporza it has been already hinted, that whatever her manner of *acting* had been, ſhe was rather a free *thinker* on ſubjects of this nature; for although ſhe had a high idea of Laura's virtuous principles, ſhe could not but be ſenſible of the danger of ſuch attachments. It would appear however, that ſhe thought any danger worth riſking that could make a diverſion from the diſmal ſtate of mind into which Laura was falling, from a continued contemplation of her miſerable connexion with a moroſe and jealous huſband.

Zeluco was the greateſt of all ſelf-tormentors; his envious and gloomy mind was eternally ſuggeſting freſh cauſes of diſquiet to itſelf. The two ideas which plagued him at preſent were, firſt that Laura diſliked him, and alſo that ſhe was fond of another. There was no cure for the firſt, but his becoming an honeſt man, which was not in his nature; and the cure of the other was nearly as difficult; for to remove ſuſpicions from the breaſt of a

man given to jealouſy, and prevent their returning, would be changing his nature. This paſſion has a tendency not only to ſour the temper, but to obſcure the underſtanding, elſe how ſhould

—Trifles, light as air,
Be to the jealous confirmation ſtrong
As proofs of Holy Writ?—

Laura's having ſhewn a diſpoſition to remain at home on hearing that Carloſtein was of the party to Baia; her having preferred her brother's company to his when they returned; her having left the company abruptly at ſupper; and her dejection of ſpirits from the time that the Nobleman was confined by the hurt in his eye, Zeluco imputed to the intereſt which ſhe took in this Nobleman, and to her diſlike to Carloſtein on that account.

Zeluco was one of thoſe amiable creatures who being ſeldom at peace with themſelves cannot bear that their neighbours ſhould enjoy tranquillity. Laura uſed the pretence of ill health for a conſiderable time

time after her being obliged to retire from the company at ſupper, merely that ſhe might be allowed to keep her apartment, enjoy the ſociety of her mother and Signora Sporza, and be ſpared from that of her huſband.

When ſhe ſeemed a little better, her brother was added to the number of her viſitors; and even after ſhe went abroad, ſhe viſited nobody but her mother or Signora Sporza. Zeluco explained her reſerve, low ſpirits, and love of retirement, in the ſame manner that he had done her previous behaviour; and his ſullenneſs augmented daily. Laura was endeavouring one day to divert her melancholy with her harpſichord; Zeluco heard the ſound while he ſat in his own apartment, and it redoubled his ill-humour. He ſuddenly entered the room where ſhe was playing, and threw himſelf on a chair oppoſite to her with every mark of diſpleaſure.

She had obſerved that taking any notice of him, particularly by ſpeaking to him,

on ſuch occaſions, never failed to draw from him ſome brutal anſwer; ſhe therefore ſaid nothing, but played an air of ſuch ſoothing melody as might have ſubdued the rancour of a dæmon.

"You are mightily fond of Italian muſic, Madam," ſaid he, after ſome minutes of ſilence.

"I am, indeed," replied ſhe, ſtopping for a moment, endeavouring to ſmile upon him, and then reſuming her inſtrument.

"You prefer whatever is Italian, I have obſerved," rejoined he, with a malignant look.

"I cannot entirely ſay that," anſwered ſhe, quitting the harpſichord; "but their muſic is generally preferred to that of any other nation."

"Yet you are half a German," reſumed he.

"More than half," ſaid Laura. "I was born and educated in my father's country."

"It

"It is a wonder then that you have not ſome partiality for your countrymen."

"I eſteem them highly," ſaid Laura; "all the world acknowledge them to be a brave and worthy people."

"But you think the Italians more *amiable?*" added he, prolonging the laſt word.

Laura made no anſwer, but applied again to the harpſichord, wiſhing to put an end to a dialogue which ſhe found highly diſagreeable, although ſhe did not comprehend the motive or tendency of it.

Zeluco ſtarted up, and walked with a hurried ſtep acroſs the room, and then turning ſuddenly to Laura, "You diſlike the Baron Carloſtein, Madam, do you not?" reſumed he.

"Diſlike him, Sir?" ſaid ſhe, alarmed and bluſhing.

"Yes, Madam, you hate him."

"I ſhould be glad," ſaid ſhe, "to have no reaſon to hate any body."

"And

"And what reaſon have you for hating him, Madam?"

"I have not ſaid that it is *him* I hate," replied ſhe, with ſome degree of indignation.

"Oh! you have not *ſaid* it," rejoined he, miſtaking the implication of her words; "you have only *ſhewn* it by your behaviour."

"I do not comprehend your meaning," ſaid ſhe.

"Why would you not admit him into the carriage on your return from Baia?"

"I wiſhed to converſe with my brother," ſaid ſhe.

"Perhaps you would have preferred another to either," added he, looking maliciouſly in her face.

"I do not know that I ſhould," ſaid Laura.

"But I know it, Madam; I know who intereſts you more than all the world, and on whoſe account the Baron Carloſtein is the object of your diſpleaſure."

Laura

Laura could not hear this name without emotion. She again coloured, repeating with a faultering voice, "*My diſpleaſure!*"

"Yes, Madam, *your* diſpleaſure," cried Zeluco, with a raiſed voice; "you cannot hide it, you redden with reſentment at the bare mention of his name; but I would have you to know, that he is a man whom I eſteem; and I wiſh the blow he dealt to that fine eſſenced minion had beat his brains out."

As he pronounced this with violent emphaſis and action, he ſtruck his cane through a mirror, and ruſhed out of the room, leaving Laura filled with contempt and indignation at his ridiculous and frantic behaviour.

Zeluco, like many other peeviſh and fiery tempered people, was apt to diſplay his ill-humour at the expence of his furniture; but Laura had never ſeen him ſo violently agitated on any former occaſion.

She was not ſorry, however, that his ſuſpicions, ſince ſuſpicions of ſome perſon

or other he muſt have, were directed to a man quite indifferent to her.

A footman entering the room as Zeluco went out, ſhe mentioned the mirror having been accidentally broken, and ordered another directly in its place to prevent farther remarks on the ſubject; and ſhe determined to paſs that evening with Signora Sporza.

CHAP. LXX.

The Indiſcretion of a Friend.

HITHERTO Laura had been ſucceſsful in her endeavours to hide from the ſervants the ill-footing on which her huſband and ſhe were; but Zeluco had ſpoken during the foregoing dialogue in ſuch a loud tone, that a maid of Laura's, who was in one of the adjoining chambers, heard a great part of it.

This maid felt herſelf quite overloaded with ſo much important intelligence, and ſeeing nobody at home to whom ſhe could conveniently conſign it, ſhe haſtened to Signora Sporza, whom ſhe knew to be the friend of her miſtreſs, and immediately informed her of all ſhe had heard; and wherever there might have been a gap in the narrative from her not having heard diſtinctly, ſhe took care to fill it up from her

her own imagination: ſo that the whole appeared an uninterrupted ſcene of brutal abuſe on the part of Zeluco, and of patience and reſignation on that of Laura.

When ſhe had finiſhed, "*Voilà un homme*," ſaid Signora Sporza, ſpeaking in French that the maid might not underſtand her; "*voilà un homme fait exprès pour être cocu.*" She then cautioned the maid very earneſtly not to mention what ſhe had heard to Madame de Seidlits, or to any other perſon, as it might be of very bad conſequence to her miſtreſs.

The maid feeling herſelf greatly relieved by what ſhe had already told, and being averſe to do any thing which would injure Laura, thought ſhe might ſafely promiſe not to mention it; which ſhe accordingly did, with a ſincere intention to keep her word.

As the maid withdrew Baron Carloſtein was introduced, and ſoon after Signora Sporza had a proof in herſelf of what moſt people experience; how much eaſier it is to give good advice than to follow it: for ſhe

ſhe was ſo full of indignation at what ſhe had heard, that ſhe could not contain herſelf more than the maid, but told the whole to the Baron, who was much more affected than ſurpriſed at the information; for, from the idea he had formed of the character of Zeluco, and what he had obſerved of his behaviour, particularly on the day of the jaunt to Baia, he was convinced that Zeluco and Laura lived unhappily together, and conjectured that ſcenes ſimilar to that which Signora Sporza had recounted to him, ſometimes paſſed between them.

In her narration, Signora Sporza diſcovered great indignation againſt Zeluco; in liſtening to it, Carloſtein ſeemed to think only on the unhappineſs of Laura: while ſhe abuſed the former, he compaſſionated the latter. After having exhauſted her rage however, pity became predominant in *her* breaſt alſo, and ſhe was actually ſhedding tears when Laura herſelf entered the room. As Laura ſeemed ſurpriſed at finding her friend in this ſtate, and began to inquire into the cauſe of her affliction, Carloſtein

thought it became him to retire, and leave them at liberty.

Laura then expreſſed the moſt tender anxiety for her friend, and begged to know what diſtreſſed her.

"Alas! my ſweet friend," ſaid Signora Sporza, "why ſhould I diſturb you with my ſorrows?

"That I may do all in my power to alleviate them," ſaid Laura, "that you may ſhew you have too much confidence in me to hide the cauſe of your grief from me."

"Have *you* ſhewn that confidence in me?" replied ſhe.

"Yes," replied Laura, "in every thing that concerned myſelf alone, or could be remedied. Tell me, therefore, what grieves you, and prove that you think me your friend."

"I think you an angel," ſaid Signora Sporza, paſſionately; "and I love you with all my ſoul; but he who is the cauſe of my preſent affliction is a monſter whom I deteſt as ſincerely as I love you." She then threw out expreſſions which plainly indicated

indicated that ſhe was acquainted with the ſcene above mentioned, and knew that ſhe was very ill treated by her huſband.

"Good Heaven!" cried Laura; "was this the ſubject of your converſation with the Baron Carloſtein when I entered?"

Signora Sporza owned that they had been converſing on this ſubject. Laura then begged of her to ſend to him directly, and intreat him not to give the moſt diſtant hint of what ſhe had told him to Captain Seidlits. "You do not know," continued ſhe, "the violence of my brother's temper, and were he to hear any thing of this nature, the conſequence would be dreadful indeed."

Signora Sporza directly wrote a letter to Carloſtein in the terms which Laura required; and he immediately returned for anſwer, that he was aware of the conſequences that might follow the mentioning any of the circumſtances ſhe had communicated to him, and aſſuring her he never ſhould.

This quieted Laura's anxiety on this head, and as ſhe could no longer entirely

avoid converſing with Signora Sporza on the ſubject of her huſband's ill treatment, ſhe endeavoured to ſoften it, ſaying, That the particulars had been exaggerated, and that ſome vexatious news had put him into ill-humour at that time, and made him behave in a manner different from his uſual conduct.

CHAP. LXXI.

Mr. N—— hears from the Baronet.

IN the mean time the honourable Mr. N——'s intimacy with Carloſtein and Seidlits continued, and gradually grew into friendſhip, eſpecially with the former, for the character and taſtes of Mr. N—— were more analogous to thoſe of Carloſtein than of Seidlits; yet he had alſo a very great degree of eſteem for the latter. It is remarkable, that the friendſhip between Mr. N—— and Carloſtein was not interrupted by their being fond of the ſame woman: both eſteemed her highly, neither had a wiſh inconſiſtent with her honour; and although Mr. N—— perceived that Laura had a ſtronger attachment to Carloſtein than to any other perſon, he had alſo that degree of candour which ſo few

poſſeſs, of being able to acquieſce in a preference againſt himſelf.

Mr. N—— had heard no account of his uncle the Baronet, or Mr. Steele, ſince he parted with them at Florence; and he had begun to be uneaſy about them, when he received a letter from the former, dated Paris, the import of which was, that they ſhould be detained in that place longer than they had intended, by a hurt which Mr. Steele had received in conſequence of a fall from his horſe, in attempting to leap over a gate in a field a few miles from Paris; that a French gentleman, who ſaw the accident, had brought him to town in his carriage, much bruiſed; but he was already better, and would ſoon be quite well.

The Baronet next mentioned, that one *Carr*, a Scotchman, who pretended to be an acquaintance of Buchanan, had called on him, ſaying, He had lately come in a trading veſſel from Naples to Marſeilles; that on his landing he had met with a young ſailor, who, ſome years ſince, had gone to the Eaſt Indies as midſhipman in

an

an Engliſh frigate, which had been loſt on the Coaſt of Malabar, but he with a few others of the crew, were ſaved; that after various diſtreſſes he had been taken into one of the veſſels of the country, and again ſhipwrecked in the Perſian gulph; had remained ſeveral years in Perſia, afterwards had found means to get to Alexandria, and from thence in a trading veſſel to Marſeilles, where this Carr had met him, and they had travelled together on foot to Paris; but on account of his ſharing his purſe with this poor ſailor, who then lay ſick at their lodgings, Carr pretended that his own finances were exhauſted: on which account he applied to him for a ſmall ſupply of money to enable them both to proceed to London. The Baronet concludes his letter in this manner:

"You may believe, my dear N——, that I was willing to relieve a man who had behaved ſo generouſly; but I wiſhed, in the firſt place, to aſcertain the truth of this Scotchman's ſtory, which I own I thought a little romantic. I gave him, therefore, only a guinea in the mean time,

and desired him to return next morning with some proof that he was of Buchanan's acquaintance; and I sent Mr. Steele's servant, Tom Dawson, with him to his lodging, with another guinea to the English sailor: Tom returned within a couple of hours, and informed me he had seen the sailor, who was a young man of three or four and twenty, of the name of Warren; that Carr had shewn him a letter which he said was from Buchanan to a countryman of theirs at Edinburgh; that having broken open the seal of this letter, Carr desired Dawson to carry it to me, as the only testimony he could give of the truth of his story.

"After perusing it, I own I have no doubt of the truth of what Carr told me, and shall certainly supply these two poor fellows with money sufficient to carry them home. Buchanan's epistle is so characteristic that I had it transcribed, and now send you the copy. As you are no very enthusiastic virtuoso, it may possibly entertain you as much as any manuscript lately dug out of Herculaneum.

"There

"There is another compoſition which I ſhould be very well pleaſed to get a ſight of, and that is by no leſs a perſonage than Steele's ſervant, Dawſon. He told his maſter the other day, he wiſhed to go to Verſailles, and being aſked what buſineſs he had there; he ſaid, "He had received "a letter from Ben Jackſon, your father's "groom, deſiring him to be ſure to ſend "him a deſcription all about France and "Paris; and he therefore wiſhed to add "a word or two about Verſailles, being "the king's country-houſe." Steele, who, you know, would ſuffer great inconveniency himſelf, rather than deprive any perſon depending upon him of ſuch a gratification, immediately aſſented; and he tells me, that Dawſon has been ſcribbling ever ſince his return. An account of Paris, and of the French nation, from ſuch a hand, muſt of courſe be entertaining. I am ſorry, therefore, I cannot ſend it you with the incloſed.

"Adieu, my dear Edward,—Believe me ever ſincerely Yours, *****."

CHAP. LXXII.

Buchanan's Letter.

To Mr. Archibald Campbell, Tobacconiſt, at the Sign of the Highlander, Cannon-gate, Edinburgh.

DEAR ARCHY, Naples.

I Received your kind epiſtle, with the agreeable news that all our friends in the weſt country are well. I would have acknowledged the favour long ago, but could not find a private hand to carry my letter; for I do not chooſe to put my friends to the expence of poſtage, and therefore I make it a rule never to write by the poſt to any but ſtrangers.

" Your fears of my having forgot you are very ill founded, for although it has been my lot to ſojourn many years among ſtrangers,

ſtrangers, yet, thanks be unto God, I never learned to prefer foreigners to my own countrymen: on the contrary, I do feel, that I like my old friends the better in proportion as I increaſe my new acquaintance. So you ſee there is little danger of my forgetting *them*, and far leſs my blood relations; for ſurely blood is thicker than water.

"As for my maſter, the honourable Mr. N——, he is an exception; for he has been my benefactor, and it is impoſſible for me to be more attached to the neareſt relations I have than to him: he is a kind-hearted and noble-minded gentleman indeed; and although he is moſt generous on proper occaſions, he avoids the idle expence of many of his countrymen, whoſe extravagance, when they are on their tours, as they call them, render them the prey and laughing-ſtock of all the countries through which they paſs. And if you were only to ſee the ſums which thoſe thoughtleſs young lads, who have ten times more money than wit to guide it, throw away

away on uſeleſs *nigg-nyes* *, while thouſands around them are pinched for the neceſſaries of life, it would make the very hair of your head, my dear Archy, ſtand up like the locks of Meduſa.

"Before we left England, which, as I wrote to you at the time, Mr. N—— was adviſed to do on account of his health; I endeavoured to perſuade him to go and drink goats whey among the healthful hills of the Highlands, where there are neither coughs, colds, nor ſhortneſs of breath, and where he could have lived like a king at a moderate expence; but he was prevailed on to try Italy, which has, to be ſure, ſucceeded pretty well; but I am ſtill in hopes that he will ſome time or other make a viſit to Scotland, for he always ſpeaks with reſpect of our country, which the ignorant and worthleſs of the Engliſh never do.

"You deſire my opinion of Italy and its inhabitants, which I ſhall now give you without prejudice or partiality. The Ita-

* Nigg-nyes, or bawbles.

lians are a moſt ingenious people. I have been even tempted to think that there is ſomething favourable to ingenuity in the very air or ſoil, or ſomething elſe belonging to this happily ſituated peninſula of Italy, for it became in the firſt place the ſeat of the empire of the world by the valour and addreſs of its inhabitants; when I ſay the world, I mean all but the northern part of Great Britain, which the Romans were ſo far from ſubduing, that they were obliged to build walls and ramparts acroſs the iſland; firſt, between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, and next, from Carliſle to Newcaſtle, to defend themſelves from our anceſtors the Caledonians.

"But when the Roman empire was overturned by the Goths, Rome became the ſeat of a new kind of empire, and that is the empire of the Popes. In ſhort, the inhabitants of Italy firſt ſubdued mankind by open force; and ſecondly, by impoſition and pawkry *. And after ſeveral ages of

* Pawkry, cunning.

Gothic

Gothic darkneſs, where does the light of knowledge firſt dawn again? Where do the arts firſt appear, and where are they carried to the greateſt perfection? Why, in this ſame Italy. This looks, I ſay, as if there were ſomething peculiarly favourable to ingenuity in this country. But whatever may be in that notion, with all the diſadvantages to which they are expoſed from a miſerably bad government, the preſent race of Italians certainly are a civilized, diſcreet, ſober people, not ſo frank as the French, nor yet ſo reſerved as the Engliſh; but with more ſhrewdneſs of underſtanding perhaps than either.

"In the formation of ſtatues and graven images they are ſuppoſed to ſurpaſs all the nations of Europe; for in our own country, you know, this occupation was never much encouraged, becauſe, in the opinion of ſeveral ſerious Chriſtians of the Preſbyterian perſuaſion, it flies in the teeth of the ſecond commandment.

"The Italians are fond of muſic to an aſtoniſhing, and even to an unwarrantable degree;

degree; the number of eunuchs, which they employ at a great expence, is a pretty plain proof that they ſpare nothing to have their ears tickled; they even oblige them to ſing in the very churches; yet ſurely they might find houſes enough to keep concerts in without profaning the houſe of God.—What would you think, Archibald, of hearing a dozen of fiddlers playing in the High Church of Edinburgh before and after ſermon on the Lord's-day? I am ſure it would ſhock you, as it did me, to a very great degree.

"Some people endeavour to defend this, ſaying, that it aſſiſts devotion, and a great deal of idle *cliſh-maclaiver* * of the ſame kind; for my part, I have no good opinion of that ſort of devotion which a parcel of fiddlers can aſſiſt. And people may argue as they pleaſe, but aſſuredly fiddles are better contrived to promote dancing than either meditation or prayer. At the ſame

* Idle tittle-tattle.

time

time it muſt be confeſſed, that Italian muſic, when performed in a proper place and on proper occaſions, is very delightful to hear; though the beſt of it never thrilled through my heart ſo pleaſingly as the ſweet melody of ſome of our own tunes.

"As to the vulgar notion, that the Scottiſh muſic was invented by David Rizzio, the Italian ſecretary to Queen Mary, it is contrary to hiſtory, to tradition, and to common ſenſe; for nothing requires a greater degree of popularity, or would be a ſtronger proof of a man's being eſteemed and univerſally admired in a country, than his forming the national taſte in muſic; but Davy Rizzio, poor creature, was univerſally hated during the ſhort time he lived in Scotland; and if any tunes had been known to be of his invention, that circumſtance alone would have been ſufficient to prevent their ever being ſung or played in that country.

"You inquire alſo concerning the city of Naples compared with other places:—I will only ſay in a few words, that it is a large

large and populous town, pleaſingly ſituated in the view of a ſpacious bay, little inferior in beauty to Loch Lomond itſelf. The houſes are built of free ſtone, ſeveral ſtories high, ſo that it has a more lofty appearance than London, but not quite ſo ſublime as Edinburgh.

" But it is not in the appearance of the fields, or of the cities, nor in the cuſtoms or genius of the inhabitants, that the country where you reſide has the great advantage over this land of darkneſs, but in the important article of religion; which here conſiſts almoſt entirely of external ſhow and gewgawry, of bowings, courteſies, and various geſticulations, of fantaſtical dreſſes, proceſſions and other idle ceremonials, which are in no way connected with true piety, and altogether oppoſite to the ſimplicity of the goſpel, which you, my dear friend, enjoy the ineſtimable privilege of hearing preached in its native purity and truth.—As for your high dignified clergy, their lordſhips, and their eminencies, and his holineſs himſelf, I have heard ſome of

them perform, and if I may judge of the reſt by thoſe I have heard, they are mere pigmies upon pedeſtals, compared with the preachers you have an opportunity of hearing every Lord's-day.

" Having now briefly touched upon moſt of the points you mention in your laſt letter, I muſt recommend the bearer to your friendly offices; his name is Andrew Carr, of the Carrs of the South, his father being a ſhoemaker in Selkirk; he came to this country in the ſervice of an Engliſh gentleman, whom he was obliged to quit through the malice of the valet de chambre, who, taking advantage of the young man's being overtaken with liquor on the laſt St. Andrew's day, turned him off, on the pretext of his being an habitual drunkard.

" He remained however at Naples, in expectation of being taken into the ſervice of ſome other Engliſh gentleman, and being young, thoughtleſs, and of a canty * turn

* Cheerful.

of

of mind, he lived for ſome time very idly. When any of the Engliſh ſervants were allowed a day of pleaſuring, as they call it, Andrew was ſure to be of the party; and at this rate, all the money he received from his late maſter would ſoon have been *caſt at the cocks**:—but in the midſt of this, he received a letter from his mother, at Selkirk, informing him of his father's death, by which ſhe and his ſiſter were reduced to great poverty and diſtreſs. This news made a moſt laudable alteration in the conduct of Carr; he ſhunned all thoſe parties of which he had formerly been ſo fond. And when our Dick preſſed him very much, ſaying, "You uſed to be as fond of mirth and good wine as your neighbours;" Andrew ſhook his head, and replied, "Gif I drink wine, Richard, my mother and ſiſter muſt drink water;" and the very next day he called on me with forty dollars, which he deſired me to pay to Mr. N——'s Banker, for an order on a houſe at Edinburgh, to

* Thrown away.

remit the value to his mother. Mr. N—— was ſo much pleaſed when he heard of this, that he doubled the remittance to Carr's mother, and alſo furniſhed him with money ſufficient to defray the expence of his journey through France to Edinburgh, where, by my advice, he intends to eſtabliſh himſelf as a dancing-maſter, being one of the beſt dancers of an Engliſh hornpipe, a Scottiſh jigg, or a ſtrathſpey, that I ever ſaw. It is a thouſand pities that he continued ſo long at the ſhoe-making trade, becauſe the conſtant ſtooping has given a roundneſs to his back and ſhoulders which hurts his air a little in dancing of a minuet; but he is to remain three weeks or a month at Paris to improve himſelf, which will remove that impediment.

"I deſire, that you will put my name-ſake, little Geordy, to Mr. Carr's ſchool, and I beg that you will aſſiſt him by your recommendation.

"I ſend by Mr. Carr two tortoiſe-ſhell ſnuff-boxes, one for you, and the other for

for Mr. Mackintoſh; they are in the Neapolitan taſte, only inſtead of their uſual ornaments, I cauſed the maker to inlay the firſt with a golden thiſtle, with the inſcription, *Nemo me impune laceſſit*; and the other, with a cat rampant, which is the creſt of the Mackintoſhes, and the motto, *Touch not the cat bot* a glove.* I hope you will accept of them as ſmall tokens of my friendſhip to you both. I ſend alſo a blue velvet bonnet as a new year's gift to little Geordy. I muſt now end this long letter, begging to be reſpectfully remembered to the laird of Clairvoky and his lady, to Mr. Hector Monro, and his couſin Æneas, to black Colin Campbell, and blind Saunders, and to all inquiring friends on the water of Enrick; and ſo, my dear Archy,

I remain your affectionate couſin,

GEORGE BUCHANAN."

* Without.

CHAP. LXXIII.

Dawſon's Letter.

ALTHOUGH the Baronet could not with propriety get a ſight of the letter which Dawſon had been ſo long and ſo carefully compoſing for the benefit of his friend Ben Jackſon, we have had the good fortune to procure a copy, faithfully taken from the original; which is here inſerted as a companion to the foregoing.

A Monſeer,
Monſeer BENJAMIN JACKSON, che le
Count de ——,
—— Shire.

Engliterr.

DEAR BEN,

Having received yours per courſe, this ſerves to let you know, that I am well and hearty, and ſo is Sir ——; but as for Mr. Steele,

Steele, he had a fall from his horſe in taking a very eaſy leap, which hurt him a little, but he is growing better, thank God, for he is as good a ſoul and as generous to ſervants as any alive:—it was all the horſe's fault, *that* I muſt ſay in juſtice to Mr. Steele, who put more truſt in this lazy toad than he deſerved; being deceived by the owner, who pretended he was a very good leaper. Now to ſay the truth, I have not ſeen many tolerable horſes fit for hunting in all this town; and as for the women, about which your ſiſter Beſs makes inquiry, they are all for the moſt part painted, at leaſt their faces: then for the reſt, they hardly ever nick their tails, I mean of the horſes, for England is the only country for horſes and women. I do not believe that all Paris can produce the like of Eclipſe, and your ſiſter Beſs.

Since you and your ſiſter Beſs deſire it, I ſhall now write to you a little about the deſcription of this here town and country. In my own private opinion, Paris is but a tireſome town to live in, for there is none

of the common neceſſaries of life, as porter or good ale; and as for their beef, they boil it to rags. Wine to be ſure is cheaper here, but not ſo ſtrong and genuine as in London.

I have been at the French King's palace, which they call Verſailles in their language; it is out of town, the ſame as Kew or Windſor is with our king. I went firſt and foremoſt to ſee the ſtables, which to be ſure is very grand, and there they have ſome very good looking horſes, eſpecially Engliſh hunters: it grieved me to ſee ſo many of our own beſt ſubjects in the ſervice of our lawful enemy, which to be ſure the French King is.

We little think how many of our fellow-creatures are ſeduced from England to diſtant countries, and expoſed to the worſt of uſage, from both the French and Spaniards; for none of them know how an Engliſh horſe ought to be treated.

When I was at Verſailles, I ſaw the Dowfineſs, which is all the ſame as the Prince of Wales's wife with us; ſhe is one of the prettieſt women I have ſeen in France, being

ing very fair and blooming, and more like an Engliſh woman than a French, and not unlike your ſiſter Beſs, only her dreſs was different.

She rides like the ladies in England, with both her legs on the ſame ſide of the horſe, whereas I have ſeen many women ſince I came abroad ride on horſeback like men, which I think a bad contrivance, and I am ſurpriſed their huſbands permit it. But I am told the women here do whatever they pleaſe, for all over France "the grey mare is the better horſe." Yet what contradicts this, and which I cannot account for, is what I heard my Lord D——'s butler tell yeſterday; which is this, that by a law which he mentioned, but I have forgot its name, though it ſounded ſomething like a leek—By that there law, he ſaid, that no woman can be king in France; that is, he did not mean by way of a bull, for he is of Engliſh parentage, born at Kilkenny, but he meant that no woman can ever be queen in France, as our women in England are. As for inſtance, ſuppoſe the

king has no ſons, but only a daughter, then when the king dies, this here daughter, according to that there law, cannot be made queen, but the next near relation, provided he is a man, is made king, and not the laſt king's daughter, which to be ſure is very unjuſt. But you will ſay, can there be no queen in France then? Yes, whoever the king marries is queen; and as long as her huſband lives ſhe may govern him, and rule the nation as much as ſhe pleaſes; but when he dies, ſhe is not permitted to rule any longer, except the next king pleaſes.

Now this ſhews, and you may tell your ſiſter Beſs ſo, that in ſpite of all the coaxing and courting which the French uſe to the women, yet they are falſe-hearted towards them at the bottom, and do not reſpect them ſo much as to the main point, as we Engliſh does; and yet one of thoſe d——d Parlivoos will go farther with ſome women in a day, than an Engliſhman in a month—all owing to their impudence; for a common man has as much impudence in France as a man-midwife has in England.

By

By the bye, Ben, I wonder you allow Tournelle, my Lord's French ſervant, to be ſo much with your ſiſter Beſs; he pretends to teach her the French cortillong, but who knows what ſort of cortillongs he may try to teach her; in my own opinion, old John Lancaſhere could teach her dancing as well, and this would be more decent for the reputation of her vertue: but you need not ſhew this part of my letter to Beſs, but make your own uſe of it.

I have ſeen the French horſe guards which they call Jangdarms; the men are ſmart-looking young fellows enough, but the horſes are poor waſhy things in compariſon of our dragoons.

The Swiſs guards are ſtout men, clothed in ſcarlet, the ſame as our ſoldiers; but they have mouſtaches on their lips like the rat-catcher in St. Giles's.

The French foot guards are dreſſed in blue, and all the marching regiments in white, which has a very fooliſh appearance for ſoldiers; and as for blue regimentals,

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it is only fit for the blue horſe or the artillery.

I believe the French army would have no great chance with our troops in a fair battle upon plain ground. It is lucky for the Mounſeers, that there is no road by land between Dover and Calais; but as it is, I wonder the king does not ſend ſome regiments by ſea to take Paris, which could make no great reſiſtance; for there is no walls round the town, and there would be a good deal of plunder.

But after all, I like Paris better than Naples, though it is ſo near Mount Veſuvius, which all ſtrangers go to ſee, the ſame as they do St. Paul's, the Monument, and lions in the Tower of London: it is to be ſure continually ſmoking and throwing out fiery aſhes and other combuſtibles, ſuch as none of our Engliſh mountains does. I went one night to the top of it with Mr. N———'s valet Buchanan, and one Duncan Targe, another Scotchman; I thought I ſhould have been choked with

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the ſmoke and ſulphurous ſmell. But as for Buchanan and Targe, it gave them no diſturbance; the reaſon of which I take to be, that the Scotch are accuſtomed from their infancy to brimſtone and bad ſmells in their own country. I do not ſay this by way of diſparagement to them two, who are not bad kind of men—only a little proud; but of the Scotch in general, who in my opinion ought to be reſtrained by act of parliament to their own country, otherwiſe I do believe, in my conſcience, ſooner or later, they will eat up Old England.

I have ſent unto you, by the bearer, a pappy maſhee tobacco box, and a dozen pair of gloves, for your ſiſter Beſs, who will alſo deliver to you this letter, which I have taken three days in writing, to oblige you and Beſs; and I durſt not write by the poſt, for if the French found this letter, they would take me up for a ſpy, and ſhut me up in the Baſtile during my life; and in England I am told all foreign letters

ters are opened by the miniſtry, in which caſe this might bring you into trouble, becauſe of the box and gloves, which being counterband againſt the act of parliament, the king would be enraged if he knew of ſuch a thing, which ſtands to reaſon, all ſmuggled goods being ſo much money out of his pocket.—All from, dear Ben, with my kind love to your ſiſter Beſs,

Your Servant to command,

THOMAS DAWSON.

CHAP. LXXIV.

A Letter from the Baronet to the Honourable Mr. N——.

A FEW poſts after the arrival of this packet, Mr. N—— received the following letter from his uncle:

MY DEAR EDWARD, Paris.

I will now give you a little more of Carr the Scot, and the Engliſh ſeaman.—In conſequence of Dawſon's having mentioned to his maſter, that the latter ſeemed ſickly, and was but very indifferently accommodated in lodgings, Steele had the humanity to do what I ought to have done, but which I confeſs I neglected. He ſent a phyſician to viſit him, who having given it as his opinion, that the young Engliſhman required nothing but reſt and proper diet to re-eſtabliſh his health, Mr. Steele then ſent for the landlord of the houſe where

Carr

Carr and he were quartered, desiring that he would immediately give them a more convenient apartment, and let the young man have that particular diet which the doctor recommended; for all which he indemnified the man by an immediate advance of money, and sent a message to the sailor, that he wished to see him as soon as he could easily walk to the hotel, which was at no great distance from their inn.

Carr and Warren came together two days after receiving this message; the latter is a well-looking man, of about twenty-three or twenty-four years of age; he appeared emaciated, but is naturally of a stout constitution, and mends daily. He was desired to sit down, and he gave a short account of his disasters and long residence in Persia, in a modest and sensible manner.

But I leave you to imagine our surprise and pleasure, when in the course of the conversation we discovered that this sailor is brother to Lady Elizabeth's young friend Miss Warren; the same who went in a frigate as a midshipman to the East Indies

the year before her father's death, and was ſuppoſed to have been loſt in the paſſage, as neither the veſſel nor any of the crew were afterwards heard of. You muſt remember Lady Elizabeth's relating thoſe circumſtances to you and to me at N—— Houſe, one day after Miſs Warren left the room, which ſhe did on your mentioning an Eaſt India ſhip's having ſtruck on a bank in going out of the Channel; and your aunt at the ſame time begged of you to be guarded in your diſcourſe in that young lady's company, as every hint relative to naval engagements or ſhipwrecks was apt to rouſe within her mind the painful recollection of her own family misfortunes. I will not attempt to deſcribe young Warren's joy, on my informing him that I was acquainted with his ſiſter, and that ſhe was well and happily ſituated; nor how ſuddenly that joy was checked, when he inquired about his father. I anſwered, "I had heard nothing of him very lately;" but the youth had obſerved, that Steele made a ſudden involuntary movement at the queſtion, and

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he ſaw me look ſorrowful when I made the anſwer. "Alas," cried he, wringing his hands, "my father is dead—I ſhall never ſee him more." We were ſilent, which rendered his ſuſpicions certainty. The young man then burſt into tears: after allowing them to flow for ſome time in ſilence, I told him that his father had died in battle, exerting himſelf gallantly in the cauſe of his country. The ſatisfaction which this communicated was viſible through his tears; he made me repeat all the circumſtances I knew, again and again. I ſhall never forget the emotion and ardour which appeared in the youth's countenance while he liſtened.—"My father," cried he with exultation, "was a brave officer."—"That he was," ſaid I. "I had the honour of knowing him; his behaviour during the action in which he fell was praiſed, and his death regretted by the whole fleet." The young man continued to ſhed tears.

Steele is a worthy fellow—I like him more and more; he took hold of Warren's hand, and was going to ſay ſomething conſolatory

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to him, but his voice failing he alſo burſt into tears, and he only could utter the words *damn it*, while he haſtily rubbed his eyes, in a kind of indignation, at finding himſelf crying. I ſaid every thing that I imagined could ſooth young Warren;—we ordered an apartment for him at our hotel;—poor Carr was exceedingly happy; he ſaid he had always ſuſpected that Mr. Warren was of genteel parentage, and even attempted to make an apology for ſome parts of his own behaviour which he thought had been too familiar. You may eaſily conceive how this was received by one of Warren's ſenſibility; he ſhook him by the hand, called him his benefactor, and ſaid he would never forget what he owed to him. Carr, however, declared he knew what belonged to a gentleman and the ſon of an officer, and only deſired leave to continue to attend him in the quality of a ſervant till his arrival in England; and notwithſtanding all Warren could urge, he would remain with him on no other conditions.

I have prevailed on this young man to accept of my credit for what is immediately neceſſary for his decent equipment. All his misfortunes have not damped his fondneſs for his profeſſion. He has no views nor hopes independent of it; and his moſt ardent wiſh, after ſeeing his ſiſter, is to return to his duty, in the hopes of promotion as an officer. Steele is wonderfully attached to him, and Warren ſeems to have the warmeſt eſteem and moſt grateful affection for Steele, who is now ſo well that we think of leaving this in a few days; and my next letter, I hope, will be dated from N—— Houſe. God bleſs you, my dear Edward!

CHAP. LXXV.

A ſecond Letter from the Baronet to the Honourable Mr. N——.

TWO or three weeks after this, Mr. N—— received another letter from his uncle, of which what follows is an extract:

" Our reception at N—— Houſe was moſt joyful; Steele's mother and his uncle Transfer were both there when we arrived. The former flew with impatience into her ſon's arms before he had finiſhed his compliments to your father and Lady Elizabeth. Transfer aſſured Steele, as he ſhook him by the hand, that he was not ſo happy even at the peace, although he had then gained ſix thouſand pounds by the riſe of ſtock. While the mother, uncle, and nephew were entertaining each other, I pre-

ſented young Warren to his ſiſter. The tenderneſs of this ſcene exceeds my power of deſcription; your father was moved even to tears, while Lady Elizabeth beheld it with a ſmile of ſerene ſatisfaction. I do not know how to account for this, for who is more alive to the feelings of humanity than her Ladyſhip? Perhaps ſhe had anticipated the meeting in her imagination: ſo that when it actually took place, nothing happened but what ſhe had foreſeen; whereas your father was taken by ſurpriſe, or perhaps Lady Elizabeth's attention to ſupport her young friend during this pathetic interview prevented her from being ſo much affected herſelf as ſhe would otherwiſe have been.

"Young Warren behaved with great propriety, for his behaviour was natural. His firſt expreſſions were thoſe of the moſt affectionate tenderneſs for his ſiſter; his next, of gratitude to Lady Elizabeth and your father, for the parental kindneſs they had ſhewn to his orphan ſiſter; the mention of which brought the recollection of their

own

own father into the minds of both. The fine countenance of Miſs Warren, bathed in tears, fell upon her brother's ſhoulder, while he, greatly agitated, was ſcarcely able to ſuſtain her and himſelf.

"In this attitude they continued for ſome time in the midſt of a group too much affected to give them any interruption.

"Miſs Warren ſeeming to recover herſelf, and attempting to apologize to the company, Lady Elizabeth took her by the hand, and ſaid, "I beg you will come with me, my dear, I have ſomething to ſay to you." Then ſupporting Miſs Warren with one hand, and drawing her brother after her with the other, ſhe conducted both into another room. "You muſt have many things to communicate in which you will be under reſtraint from the preſence of even your beſt friends." So ſaying, ſhe left them together, and returned to the company.

"Mrs. Steele was inclined to have a tête-à-tête with her ſon; but Transfer, who obſerved her drawing him apart, oppoſed

it, unleſs he were admitted of the party; he ſwore he loved his nephew as well as his ſiſter could love her ſon, and he had no notion of allowing him to be ſeduced from him on the very day of his arrival.

" After Warren and his ſiſter had been together about an hour, he called in Carr, whom the young lady was moſt deſirous of ſeeing. She ſeems almoſt in love with this fellow ever ſince her brother informed her of Carr's behaviour to him; and reſpects him ſo much for the goodneſs of his heart, that ſhe cannot bear to hear him turned into ridicule on any account.

" I read Buchanan's letter the other day to your father and Lady Elizabeth. We laughed a little at an expreſſion in it concerning Carr's air in dancing a minuet. Miſs Warren did not quite reliſh the jeſt. I do in my conſcience believe that had a man, with the face and perſon of the Belvidere Apollo, neglected her brother in his diſtreſs, no future attention to herſelf could have made this young Lady reſpect him ſo much as ſhe does this poor fellow.

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"The enthuſiaſtic affection of Miſs Warren for her brother bodes well for our friend Steele, who is her paſſionate admirer as much as ever; and if I am not greatly miſtaken, the Lady views him already in a different light from what ſhe did before he went abroad. I am ſo much convinced of this, that I have ventured to give Steele ſome encouraging hints to that purpoſe. Your father alſo wiſhes him to renew his addreſſes, and I am certain that Steele's heart prompts him to the ſame; his natural diffidence, however, joined to the abhorrence he has for importuning any body, have hitherto reſtrained him; he derives little encouragement from Miſs Warren's affable behaviour to him, which he entirely imputes to complaiſance for her brother, whoſe friendſhip for Steele increaſes daily. But in my opinion, independent of all conſideration of her brother, the damſel herſelf now views honeſt Steele with other eyes than ſhe did formerly. Indeed both your father and Lady Elizabeth declare that he is improved in many reſpects by his travels.

Poſſibly you may lay claim to part of the honour of this, for I believe you were his only *ami du voyage*. Adieu, my dear Edward. I rejoice in the accounts of your continued good health, and hope you will ſtay no longer abroad than the time requiſite for confirming it, ſo that you may never again need to quit Old England on that account."

CHAP. LXXVI.

Prudent Conduct of Laura.

IT is now full time to return to Laura, from whom the reader may perhaps think we have been abſent too long. When we left her, ſhe had prevailed on Signora Sporza to write to Carloſtein, and had ſeen his anſwer, wherein he gave aſſurances not to give the leaſt hint to his friend Captain Seidlits of the ill footing on which Zeluco and his ſiſter were. After the diſcovery made by the maid to Signora Sporza, it was no longer in Laura's power to adhere to the plan ſhe had formed, by avoiding converſations with Signora Sporza on a topic which ſhe introduced as often as they were together by themſelves. And in the courſe of thoſe converſations Signora Sporza made no ſcruple of giving it as her opinion, that Laura ought not to ſubmit to the caprices

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and ill-humour of a man ſhe did not love, and whom it was impoſſible ſhe ever ſhould; one, whoſe love for her was already exhauſted, and which, if it ſhould ever return, muſt, now that his true character had developed itſelf, prove a curſe, not a bleſſing, to his wife: the beſt meaſure which Laura could adopt therefore, was, to inform her mother and brother of the true ſtate of the caſe, and to ſeparate, on the beſt terms they could procure, from her huſband for ever.

Nothing was more earneſtly deſired by Laura than a ſeparation upon any terms from Zeluco: but as this could not be done without informing her mother of the miſery of her ſituation, ſhe could not bear to give a parent, for whom ſhe felt the moſt tender affection, the remorſe of thinking that *ſhe* had been the moſt active cauſe of her child's miſery. She was alſo afraid of her brother, whom ſhe knew to be of a temper to call her huſband to a ſevere account for his conduct towards her, the conſequences of which, in every point of view, appeared to her dreadful;

dreadful; a third conſideration, it is probable, had ſome weight with her—ſhe had reaſon to believe ſhe was with child.

Laura, therefore, inſiſted firmly with Signora Sporza to be allowed to judge for herſelf in this particular, and convinced her that ſhe ſhould be highly offended if Signora Sporza gave the leaſt hint of the terms on which ſhe was with her huſband to her brother, or any other perſon.

Notwithſtanding the precautions which Laura took to keep her mother from the knowledge of what would give her too much uneaſineſs, if that Lady had not been a little dazzled by the glitter of magnificence which appeared in the equipages and domeſtic eſtabliſhment of Zeluco, and flattered by his ſpecious behaviour to herſelf, ſhe would have diſcovered that her daughter was unhappy. With regard to Captain Seidlits, he thought his ſiſter ſo very amiable in all reſpects, that it never entered into his mind that the man who poſſeſſed her, and who could have no motive

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but love for his original attachment to her, did not think himſelf happy in the acquiſition; and although it ſometimes occurred to him, from the penſive and melancholy air of his ſiſter, that ſhe might not be ſo very fond of her huſband as could be wiſhed, he conſidered that as a misfortune which ſhe had in common with many women, and for which there was no remedy; and he turned his thoughts from it as from an idea which if indulged could only plague himſelf, without being of ſervice to his ſiſter.

It has been already remarked, that the many fine qualities and accompliſhments which Laura poſſeſſed, and which would have fixed the eſteem and affection of a man of worth and ſentiment, had little attraction for the jaded ſenſes and corrupt taſte of Zeluco, who ſought in venal beauty and in variety a relief from *ennui*, and its never-failing companion ill-humour; but all thoſe palliations, inſtead of diminiſhing, were found to augment the incurable diſeaſe under which this wretched man laboured; who, when he became un-

ſupportable to himſelf, often endeavoured to exhauſt the virulence which corroded his own breaſt upon her, who, before ſhe knew him, had never known what *ennui* or ill-humour was.

Diſtreſſing, however, as his ill temper was, it did not ſeem ſo dreadful, as was already obſerved, in the eyes of his wife, as the returns of fondneſs with which he was occaſionally ſeized. An attachment, therefore, which Zeluco formed about this time, and was conſidered as a ſource of great affliction to his wife, proved in reality one of the moſt comfortable incidents to her that had occurred ſince her marriage.

CHAP. LXXVII.

Nerina.

——genus huic materna ſuperbum
Nobilitas dabat, incertum de patre ferebat. VIRG.

TWO ladies had lately arrived at Naples; one of them an elderly woman, the other about three or four and twenty, and of uncommon beauty. The account given of them by the banker on whom they had a credit, and which was ſupported by letters to individuals at Naples, was, that the youngeſt had a moderate fortune in her own poſſeſſion, on which ſhe lived in a genteel and independent manner, and had come to paſs a few months at Naples, that ſhe might enjoy the benefit of a purer air than that of Rome; that the elder lady was aunt to the younger, and the widow of an officer; that ſhe was in re-

duced circumſtances, and dependent on her niece.

Such was the account given of thoſe two ladies, whoſe real hiſtory was as follows:

The young one, whoſe name was Nerina, was the offspring of a ſecret amour between an unmarried woman of family in Genoa, and a muſician. The affair had been huſhed up; the lady being delivered at the houſe of a female relation in the country, the infant given to the wife of a peaſant to ſuckle, and the father retiring to Venice, where he lived on the profits of his profeſſion, and on the money which he received from the child's mother. His demands became more exorbitant than it was in her power to ſatisfy; he wrote menacing letters, but no threats could procure from her or her relations enough to ſatisfy the rapacity of the muſician; on which he formed a ſcheme to carry away the child from the peaſant's cottage, and convey her to his own houſe at Venice. He ſucceeded in his project by the connivance of the maid who

who had the care of the child. Having this pledge in his hands, he imagined that the mother or her relations would be more ſolicitous to furniſh him with money: it happened otherwiſe; the unhappy mother retired to a convent, where in a ſhort time ſhe was ſeized with a fever, of which ſhe died. After this, her relations ſet the muſician at defiance, and gave themſelves no farther trouble about him or the child. The muſician was a man of the moſt profligate principles and manners; he lived with a woman of the ſame character, who was a ſinger at the Opera. With this couple Nerina was educated; ſhe had a pretty good voice, and promiſed to be remarkably handſome. They expected that in a ſhort time the circumſtances of the family would be greatly augmented by a proper uſe of both; but Nerina was not of a diſpoſition to ſhare the profits ariſing from her perſonal accompliſhments with any perſon whatever; at the age of fifteen, therefore, ſhe abandoned her father's houſe, and the territories of the Republic, in company with

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a Venetian Nobleman. She was acquainted with the circumſtances of her own birth; and although in her diſpoſition ſhe had more affinity with her father than with her unfortunate mother, yet in converſation ſhe ſeemed to conſider herſelf as deſcended from her mother alone, and never mentioned her father, more than if ſhe had not known of his exiſtence. She lived with the Venetian, till his flow of money, which was conſiderable at the beginning of their connexion, began to ebb; ſhe then left him for a young Engliſhman, with whom ſhe embarked in a high tide of fortune, and at laſt quitted him for the ſame reaſon that ſhe had quitted the Venetian. She afterwards eſtabliſhed herſelf at Rome, and wiſhing to acquire a decent character, ſhe took an elderly woman into her ſervice, who ſhe pretended was a relation of her mother's, and lived for ſome time with as much affected modeſty as a great deal of natural impudence would permit.

It is ſaid, that people are apt through life to ſet too great a value on thoſe things

which they have found it difficult to procure in their youth, and too little on thoſe to which they have been accuſtomed. Nerina had been bred in a family in which there was a great ſcarcity of money, and a profuſion of what is ſometimes, however improperly, called love. Whether it was owing to this, or from whatever cauſe it proceeded, certain it is, that Nerina, in all her dealings, ſhewed the utmoſt attention to the former, and made very little or no account of the other.

While Nerina lived in this *decent* ſtyle at Rome, ſhe was protected by a certain Cardinal, who ſometimes ſaw her in ſecret, and by whoſe friendſhip ſhe flattered herſelf that ſhe ſhould be enabled to paſs the reſt of her life without having need of other protectors; but before ſhe could get matters arranged to her ſatisfaction, an accident happened to the Cardinal, which according to his own calculation ſhould not have happened for ſeveral years, and which Nerina did not wiſh for till the arrangements above-mentioned had taken place. The

Cardinal

Cardinal died the day after he had paſſed an evening with Nerina, during which he had been more profuſe than ever of his expreſſions of *friendſhip*.

Nerina was ſo violently affected by this premature accident, that, in her rage, ſhe could not abſtain from many abuſive expreſſions againſt his Eminence, for having ſo long delayed what ſhe thought it was his duty to have performed; but her paſſion ſubſiding by degrees, ſhe at length muſtered up all her philoſophy, which directed her, without farther loſs of time, to have recourſe to ſeveral protectors to indemnify her for her loſs of one of the Cardinal's importance.

Among thoſe was a young man of a noble family of Milan, who became deſperately in love with her, and for whom ſhe affected a reciprocal flame, but with this difference, that the young man's continued to burn with undiminiſhed fervour after the fuel which fed Nerina's was quite exhauſted. As ſoon as ſhe perceived that his money was gone, and underſtood that

he had but diſtant hopes of a freſh ſupply, a chilling alteration ſeemed to take place in the boſom of Nerina; and the youth, inſtead of ſmiles and careſſes, was received with formality and cold politeneſs.

The imprudent youth, unable to bear this kind of behaviour from a perſon who commanded all his affection, propoſed marriage as the only recompence he could make to her, now that his finances were exhauſted.

This offer made an immediate impreſſion on the mind, and ſome alteration in the behaviour of Nerina; but after weighing every circumſtance, and balancing the advantages and diſadvantages of cloſing with the propoſal, ſhe concluded that it would be attended with more trouble than ſhe was willing to beſtow, and more riſk than ſhe choſe to run. She therefore fell on means, without appearing to have given the information, of acquainting her lover's relations, that he had got into bad company at Rome, and that if he were not removed immediately, he was in danger of taking

taking an irretrievable ſtep, of the moſt fatal conſequence to his honour and happineſs. She amuſed the youth himſelf with evaſive anſwers, till one of his relations arrived at Rome, with peremptory orders from his father, for his immediate return to Milan; which the young man with infinite reluctance at length obeyed, after mutual oaths of eternal love, and many tears on his part as well as that of Nerina, whoſe agent received a liberal recompence for the intelligence.

The young man being thus diſpoſed of, and Nerina having a deſire to ſee Naples, ſhe did not think thoſe acquaintance whom ſhe had occaſionally ſeen, unknown to her Milaneſe lover, and to each other, of importance enough to induce her to baulk her fancy.

She went accordingly, and eſtabliſhed herſelf with her pretended aunt, in the manner that has been mentioned.

CHAP. LXXVIII.

Il y a dans la jalouſie plus d'amour propre que d'amour. ROCHEFOUCAULT.

ZELUCO accidentally meeting with Nerina, was ſufficiently touched with her face and figure, to wiſh to cultivate her acquaintance. He found no unſurmountable obſtacle to this, but Nerina, knowing him to be a man of great fortune, thought it worth her while to uſe all her powers of attraction, which, particularly to a man of Zeluco's character, were very ſtrong, till by degrees ſhe cheriſhed what was only a tranſient deſire into a violent paſſion.

He wiſhed however to conceal his connexion with Nerina from his wife and her relations; and although he viſited her very frequently, it was always in ſecret, ſo that their intimacy might have remained much longer

longer unknown, had all the world taken as little pains to diſcover it as Laura and her relations. But Laura received two letters in one day, both from unknown and *ſincere friends*, giving her a faithful account of her huſband's intimacy with Nerina; and explaining how ſhe might detect it. One of thoſe friends was a woman with whom Zeluco had intrigued, and who took this ſtep to be revenged of him for his infidelity; the other was a lady who ſuſpected that her huſband was fond of Laura, and hated her on that account, although well convinced that he would not ſucceed. It would have been mortifying to thoſe two benevolent creatures, had they known how very little their intelligence affected Laura. She was in the act of throwing their letters into the fire when her huſband entered the room: "You ſeem very eager to burn thoſe letters," ſaid he. "Their contents are of a nature too indifferent for me to be eager about them," replied ſhe.—"Pray, who are they from, if it be not a ſecret?" added he.—"It is a ſecret," ſaid ſhe.—"Indeed!"

ſaid he, ſnatching one of the letters that was not conſumed, from the fire, "may *I* be admitted as a confident?"—"You had better not read it," ſaid Laura coolly, and without attempting to take it from him.—"Why ſo?" ſaid he. "Becauſe," replied ſhe, "the contents will be as little ſatisfactory to you as the method of obtaining them is honourable."

"So you are afraid of my reading it," ſaid he. "I have no fears on the ſubject," replied Laura, walking towards the door.

"Stay, Madam," cried Zeluco, who knew the hand, and having obſerved the name of Nerina in the letter, ſuſpected the contents; "I have no intention to read this ſcroll, only your affecting not to know from whom it came, ſurpriſed me."—"It is no affectation, I have not the leaſt notion," ſaid Laura.—"What then, they were both anonymous?"—"They were," added ſhe.—"Some jeſt, I ſuppoſe," ſaid he, throwing the letter again into the fire, "or perhaps ſome piece of malice."—"Very poſſibly," ſaid ſhe, and left the room.

While

While Zeluco had held the half-consumed letter in his hand, he recognized the writing of the lady with whom he himself had intrigued. Knowing the jealousy of her disposition, and perceiving Nerina's name in the middle of the letter, he immediately suspected its contents: and, *albeit unused to the blushing mood*, he underwent something approaching to it, on perceiving that he had betrayed unjust suspicions of his wife, at the very instant that she received information of his own infidelity.

For some time after this incident, Zeluco behaved with more attention to Laura, and affected a greater share of good humour than was natural to him, while she shewed no symptom of being in any degree affected by the intelligence conveyed in the anonymous letters; nor did she ever after by any allusion or hint revive the recollection of them.

In the mean while Mr. N—— prevailed on Captain Seidlits to make a tour with him into the two Calabrias, and other parts of the kingdom of Naples; Carlostein having

having declined to accompany them, ſaying, as he was to remain in Italy after Seidlits, he would poſtpone it. Zeluco became daily more intoxicated with Nerina; ſhe almoſt continually occupied his thoughts, and engroſſed the greateſt part of his time, ſo that Laura was left at more freedom and in greater tranquillity than ſhe had ever enjoyed ſince her marriage.

Her huſband's vanity with regard to her was conſiderably abated, ſo that he no longer inſiſted, as he had done formerly, on her appearing at every aſſembly and public place; he was better pleaſed that ſhe ſhould remain at home, at her mother's, or Signora Sporza's, while he was paſſing his time with Nerina, and of courſe being miſſed from aſſemblies, it might be believed that he was keeping his wife company.

Laura's ſociety at this period therefore was confined to her mother, Signora Sporza, and Carloſtein; the latter ſhe ſaw almoſt every day, and frequently had opportunities of converſing with him alone at the houſe of Signora Sporza. This too indulgent

gent friend being exceedingly affected at the ſettled gloom which ſhe well ſaw had overſpread the mind of Laura, and which ſhe thought the company and converſation of Carloſtein alone had the power of diſſipating, contrived frequent means of bringing them together; and this ſhe did with ſuch addreſs, that they ſeemed to happen by accident, and without any previous arrangement on her part. Nothing could be more imprudent than the conduct of Signora Sporza, in leading her young friend into ſuch ſlippery ſituations, which ſhe did however from no other inducement than the pleaſure ſhe took in ſeeing Laura pleaſed and in good ſpirits; as for Zeluco, ſhe thought he richly deſerved the worſt that could happen, for, in her opinion, he had already put it out of his wife's power to do him injuſtice; but there is one conſideration, which, had it occurred to Signora Sporza, would have made her act very differently from what ſhe did; and that is, the effect that any eſſential ill conduct would have had on the mind of Laura herſelf.

Signora

Signora Sporza did not reflect that, had this been the caſe, no alleviation from peculiar circumſtances, no provocation on the part of her huſband, no certainty of concealment, and no conſideration of whatever kind, could have made a woman of Laura's diſpoſition forgive herſelf, or could have reſtored her that peace of mind without which happineſs cannot exiſt.

It muſt be owned that the virtue of few women was ever placed in a more perilous ſituation than that of Laura, when it is conſidered that ſhe had a fixed and well-grounded averſion for her huſband, conſtantly kept alive by freſh provocations; for ſhe was by turns teaſed by his caprices, abuſed by his unprovoked rage, inſulted by his groundleſs jealouſies, and ſtimulated by his infidelity; while a moſt amiable and accompliſhed man, for whom ſhe could not help feeling a great partiality, was deſperately in love with her, and with whom ſhe had frequent opportunities of being alone.

She received a ſecond letter from one of her anonymous correſpondents, informing her, that her huſband and one of his aſſociates, with Nerina, who was alſo to have a companion, had formed a party to paſs a few days at Caſſerta and other places, and were to ſet out that very day. Laura was as little affected by this letter as the former; ſhe threw it into the fire, and thought no more of it.

That very day, Zeluco, without the ſhadow of provocation, but in the mere wantonneſs of caprice, behaved to her in the moſt inſolent and brutal manner, telling her, "that her *favourite*," meaning the Nobleman who had the ſquabble with Carloſtein, "had abandoned her, and ſet out for Venice, and he ſuppoſed *that* was the cauſe of her low ſpirits;" on her keeping ſilence, he told her that her ſilence proceeded from inſolence and pride.

"You are miſtaken," ſaid Laura; "I never *was* inſolent, and I never had leſs reaſon to be proud; I was ſilent from contempt of an accuſation which I cannot think

think you yourſelf believe to have any foundation."

"Contempt!" cried Zeluco, fiercely.

"Contempt of a groundleſs accuſation," replied Laura.

"Your contempt is affected, Madam," ſaid Zeluco; "but your melancholy is real."

"My melancholy is indeed real," ſaid Laura, burſting into tears.

After uttering ſome ſhocking obſervations on her being ſo much affected, and the ſuppoſed cauſe, he ſaid, "I am going to the country for a few days, Madam, and leave you to mourn that your minion is not at hand to comfort you during my abſence."

CHAP. LXXIX.

The Portrait.

LAURA gave free way to the fulneſs of her ſorrow for a conſiderable time after her huſband left her; but at laſt, fearing that her mother might call and obſerve the traces of affliction on her countenance, ſhe went to Signora Sporza's, that ſhe might have time to recover herſelf, in ſome degree, before ſhe ſhould meet with Madame de Seidlits.

The ſervant did not know that the Baron Carloſtein was with his miſtreſs, he therefore told Laura that Signora Sporza was alone, and immediately introduced her into the room, where ſhe found them converſing together.

" I have been juſt telling the Baron, my dear," ſaid Signora Sporza to Laura as ſhe entered, " that I have a letter to write; I

beg therefore you will entertain him till I return."

Carloſtein perceived the marks of anguiſh which the laſt ſcene with her huſband had left on the countenance of Laura; and he conjectured rightly reſpecting the cauſe. Without aſking a queſtion, or uttering a ſyllable, his countenance expreſſed a thouſand tender inquietudes on her account. After a conſiderable ſilence, he at length ſaid, "Would to Heaven, Madam, it were in my power to alleviate your ſorrow, or contribute in any degree to your happineſs!"

"*My* happineſs!" repeated Laura, raiſing her ſpread hands, and throwing up her eyes to Heaven.

"Yes, Madam," cried Carloſtein with great emotion; "*your* happineſs, which is dearer to me than my own, or rather which more than any perſonal concern, *is* my own."

"Ah! why," ſaid Laura, "ſhould your fair proſpects be obſcured by the tempeſts in which mine ——" here ſhe checked herſelf,

herſelf, and then added, " my thoughts are diſturbed, Sir, I am not well.—I know not what I ſay."

" I have long dreaded," ſaid Carloſtein, " that you were not fortunate in all your connections; but you are bleſſed in ſome beyond the uſual lot; you have the beſt of mothers, a brother who adores you, and friends who would cheerfully expoſe themſelves to every fatigue and danger to ſerve you."

" My brother, Sir," ſaid Laura, " firſt taught me to value his friend; I learned the leſſon in my childhood, and it were vain for me to affect not being pleaſed with the intereſt you take in me; but a ſeries of unlucky incidents has involved me in a net of miſery from which the endeavours of all my friends cannot diſentangle me.—Happineſs and tranquillity are fled far from me,—I attempt not to recover what is beyond my graſp." Here ſhe burſt into a freſh flood of tears, and Carloſtein had bathed her hand with his, while in the exceſs of her deſpair ſhe was inſenſible that

he had hold of it. He attempted to comfort her by every ſuggeſtion that could convey hope or conſolation.—" No!" exclaimed ſhe; " death muſt be my only comforter; there is no hope for ſo complete a wretch as I am, but in the grave; —and miſerable creature that I am," reſumed ſhe, after a pauſe; " I cannot without reluctance even wiſh for that laſt refuge of the miſerable; how can I have the heart to wiſh for eaſe to myſelf, knowing as I do, that it cannot be obtained but at the expence of my poor mother, who would be left a prey to remorſe, horror, and deſpair!"

Carloſtein then in the moſt ſympathiſing manner, and with all the eloquence of paſſion, declared the higheſt eſteem and attachment to her; that he would conſider it as the greateſt honour and happineſs he could ever enjoy to attempt whatever could tend to her eaſe or ſatisfaction; that he eſteemed fortune, and life itſelf, as valuable only in as much as they ſhould enable

him

him to ſerve *her*, whoſe happineſs was far dearer to him than life.

"Alas!" cried Laura, "the completion of my miſery is the being ſenſible that you can be of no ſervice to me. I am convinced that your generous friendſhip would excite you to exertions of difficulty and danger in my favour; but I am in that hopeleſs ſtate, that my beſt friends, thoſe united to me by blood, as well as thoſe attached by ſentiment, muſt ſtruggle equally in vain to free me from the horrid rock of miſery to which I am fixed by chains which no earthly hand can break."

"Accurſed chains!" cried Carloſtein, "they were forged in hell, and ought not to bind an angel!"

"They will ever bind me," ſaid Laura.

"O lovelieſt and deareſt of women!" cried Carloſtein, with enthuſiaſm; "why did I not know you ſooner; often did I hear the praiſes of the accompliſhed Laura Seidlits—whom I had only ſeen in childhood; but could I imagine there was ſuch

perfection, ſuch elegance, ſuch ſoul-ſubduing loveliness, united in woman?"

Declarations of this nature, uttered with all the energy of truth and paſſion, by a graceful and amiable man, for whom ſhe had the warmeſt friendſhip, at a time when ſhe was full of indignation at the brutal behaviour of a hated huſband, could not fail to make a lively impreſſion on the heart of Laura, endued with exquiſite ſenſibility, and formed for friendſhip and love.

"Why did not your brother and I," exclaimed Carloſtein, "follow you to Italy ſooner?—Why did we loiter at Berlin and Vienna while the fiends were weaving this web of wretchedneſs?—O! would to heaven we had hurried directly to Naples!"

"Would you had!" ſaid Laura, in a languid voice.

"Bleſs you—bleſs you, my angel, for that wiſh!" cried Carloſtein, encircling her waiſt with his arms.

In this ſituation Laura ſeemed for a ſhort time to have loſt the power of recollection; but

but raiſing her eyes, they met the portrait of her father, which hung on the oppoſite wall of the room.—She gave a ſudden ſcream, and ſtruggled to get free.

"What is the matter, my angel?" ſaid Carloſtein.

"Ah! looſe me;—unhand me, Sir," cried ſhe with a voice of terror, and ſprung from his yielding arms.

"What terrifies you?" ſaid he.

"Look there!" cried ſhe, pointing to the portrait.

"I ſee a picture," ſaid Carloſtein.

"I ſee an angry father," ſaid Laura, with a trembling voice.

Carloſtein then endeavoured to ſooth and calm her ſpirits by the moſt endearing expreſſions; but as often as he approached her, ſhe moved from him, and entreated him to be gone.

"If I have offended you," cried he, "moſt earneſtly do I beg your forgiveneſs."

"I cannot forgive myſelf," replied Laura.

"In what are you to blame, angel of purity?" exclaimed he.

"Leave me; O leave me!" repeated ſhe; "it is not meet for us to be thus together.—Pray withdraw."

"When ſhall I ſee you again?" ſaid Carloſtein, in a plaintive voice.

"You ſhall hear from me ſoon," anſwered ſhe; "but at preſent, if you have any eſteem for me, leave me."

Carloſtein retired, and Laura turning to the portrait of her father, continued for a conſiderable time contemplating it with earneſtneſs, and then exclaimed, "Bleſſed effigy of one to whom honour was dearer than life, how much am I beholden to you!"

When Signora Sporza returned, ſhe ſeemed ſurpriſed at the abſence of Carloſtein. Laura ſaid, he was obliged to go, and immediately turned the diſcourſe to other ſubjects.

The two following days Carloſtein found no opportunity of ſeeing Laura; being uneaſy at the idea of having offended her, he

he told Signora Sporza that he was afraid her friend had miſunderſtood ſome part of his conduct which he wiſhed to explain, and begged ſhe would deliver a letter for that purpoſe, as he was unwilling to ſend it by a ſervant.

Signora Sporza complied with his requeſt, and the next day preſented him with the following anſwer from Laura.

" To the Baron CARLOSTEIN.

" The uneaſineſs you expreſs at the idea of my being diſpleaſed with you, may now be at an end.—I never thought you capable of any formed plan inconſiſtent with my honour. But I am ſenſible that the pleaſure I took in your converſation, and in the thoughts of your friendſhip, has led me into improprieties and dangers which a prudent and virtuous woman ſhould avoid.

" The ties by which I am bound to my huſband are ſacred, however miſerable they render me. Although his behaviour

deprives him of my eſteem, it cannot juſtify my ill conduct.

"Having ſaid this, you cannot, with reaſon, blame the reſolution I have taken, never again to meet you alone. I am perſuaded, my couſin Sporza would not have permitted ſuch meetings if ſhe had not a higher opinion of me than I deſerve.

"It will be vain for you to endeavour to prove the innocence or ſafety of our meeting as formerly; the only effect of ſuch an attempt would be to diminiſh the good opinion I entertain of you.

"Adieu, and may Heaven bleſs you! Every proof of regard and confidence, conſiſtent with duty, you may always expect from the wretched

LAURA."

CHAP. LXXX.

——Miſeri quibus
Intentata nites. HOR.

HOWEVER vexed Carloſtein was at the thoughts of being deprived of the pleaſure of ſeeing Laura as formerly, he was too well convinced of the propriety of her conduct, and too much afraid of loſing her good opinion, to make any immediate attempt to prevail on her to alter it.

He immediately ſignified, in a letter which Signora Sporza delivered to her, his gratitude for the friendſhip with which ſhe honoured him; adding, that although he perceived not any danger in the meetings which ſhe had determined to diſcontinue, yet he acquieſced in her deciſion, and would conform himſelf in that, and in every thing elſe, to her pleaſure.

He

He ſaw her occaſionally, however, at her own houſe, where he was frequently invited by Zeluco; and as, after the ſcene at Signora Sporza's, Laura's behaviour to Carloſtein was a little more conſtrained than uſual, Zeluco was more and more convinced that his wife ſtruggled in vain to conceal the diſlike ſhe had to him.

It is probable that he would have diſcovered his miſtake in this particular, had not his mind been engroſſed by his paſſion for Nerina, for whom he had taken a little villa at ſome diſtance from Naples, where his viſits, he imagined, would be leſs obſerved than while ſhe lived in town.

The ſymptoms of pregnancy became apparent on Laura, which rendered the retirement ſhe loved more expedient than ever; and as Zeluco was ſeldom at home, ſhe was for ſeveral months almoſt entirely relieved from his jealouſy, ill-humour, and fondneſs.

In truth, Nerina had as little affection for Zeluco as Laura had; but it was much eaſier for the one to feign ſentiments which

which ſhe had not, than the other; the firſt had been reared from her infancy in the ſchool of ſimulation; in her all the alluring tricks of educated artifice were engrafted on a diſpoſition naturally fraudulent. The other was habituated to truth; had ſhe been inclined to diſſemble, ſhe muſt have failed from want of practice. And if both had been equally miſtreſſes of deceit, ſtill Nerina would have had the eaſier taſk in affecting to love Zeluco; ſhe only had to get the better of indifference, whereas Laura had to overcome averſion.

Zeluco had, from the hour of his marriage, obſerved extreme coldneſs in Laura; and although, from a very ſhort period after their union, he had never been able ſo far to overcome the natural ſulkineſs of his character as to make a fair trial to gain her affection, yet he conſidered her want of it as a crime; for ſelf-love made him think it impoſſible that a woman ſhould be cold to him, who was not capriciouſly prepoſſeſſed in favour of another.

Nerina

Nerina had two objects in view: the one was to perſuade Zeluco that Laura was attached to another man; the other that ſhe herſelf was deſperately fond of him. She had hitherto found no plauſible opportunity of inſinuating the firſt, but ſhe endeavoured to convince him of the ſecond by ten thouſand little attentions, by flattering fits of jealouſy, by occaſional reſiſtance, and other allurements, which ſhe well knew how to vary opportunely; ſhe had already drawn very conſiderable ſums of money from him, and had acquired ſuch an aſcendency over him as ſhe hoped to improve into a complete and abſolute ſway.

If Zeluco happened to dine for two days ſucceſſively at home, or to mention Laura with any degree of reſpect, he was ſure ſoon after to find Nerina in apparent languor and oſtentatious dejection of ſpirits: when queſtioned by him on the cauſe, ſhe ſighed, affected to hide her tears, and begged that he would not enquire into the cauſe of that for which ſhe had too much reaſon to fear there was no remedy.

On

On being farther urged, ſhe would ſob, ſhiver, and fall into a convulſive fainting; and when ſhe had performed this with admirable nicety of action, ſhe ſeemed to recover, and after a freſh diſcharge of tears, lamented the ſeverity of her fate, in being paſſionately fond of a man who, after the ſacrifice ſhe had made, preferred another to her; and what was ſtill more mortifying, one who hated and deſpiſed him.

At other times ſhe inſinuated that his wife's relations formed a cabal to manage him entirely; that they had already taken advantage of the eaſy generoſity of his temper, and prevailed on him to ſettle a large portion of his fortune on her and her children, and had plans of carrying their rapacious views ſtill farther, ſo that in a ſhort time he would be little more than a factor on his own eſtate.

CHAP. LXXXI.

The Diſpleaſure of Captain Seidlits;—the Diſtreſs of Laura;—the Prudence of Carloſtein,—and good Senſe of Mr. N——.

SOME time after Seidlits returned from his tour he heard of this connexion with Nerina, and perceived, with an indignation which he could ill ſuppreſs, that Zeluco had not the ſame degree of attention for Laura that he formerly diſplayed.

Captain Seidlits dropt ſome expreſſions to that effect in the preſence of his ſiſter. She was alarmed at the conſequence of his harbouring ſuch ſuſpicion, and endeavoured to remove it; but fearing that ſhe had not ſucceeded, ſhe earneſtly begged that he would not ruin her mother's peace by mentioning his ſuſpicion to her.

"It

"It is not to your mother, but to your husband, I mean to talk on the occasion," said he.

Laura then endeavoured to convince him of the impropriety of his interfering undesired between man and wife, adding, That she was sensible of the fraternal interest he took in whatever concerned her, that it was her pride and happiness to have such a friend and protector, and that she would apply to him freely when she needed his interposition.

Laura was so distrustful of her brother's temper, that she renewed her remonstrances frequently on this subject. It happened once or twice that Zeluco entered the room on these very occasions, and she remarked with great pain, that Seidlits could with difficulty conceal his feelings, and that he returned the civilities of the other in a very cold manner.

This increased her fears so much, that in the presence of Signora Sporza, she acquainted Carlostein with the cause of her uneasiness, and entreated him to watch over

over his friend, and endeavour to diſſuade him from a conduct fraught with the moſt diſmal conſequences. Carloſtein expreſſed his ſatisfaction at the confidence which ſhe placed in him, and promiſed to do every thing in his power to prevent what ſhe dreaded.

Carloſtein ſoon after happened to meet his friend Seidlits walking by himſelf, and ruminating on the various inſtances he had obſerved of neglect or ill-uſage on the part of Zeluco towards Laura.

"You ſeem thoughtful, my friend," ſaid Carloſtein; "ſomething vexes you."

"Something does vex me," ſaid Seidlits.

"You do not intend then, I hope, that it ſhould be a ſecret to me."

"No, certainly.—This Zeluco, I fear, does not uſe my ſiſter as ſhe deſerves."

"I do not know who could," ſaid Carloſtein.

"He ſeems to be of a ſulky, ill temper," ſaid Seidlits.

"If

"If that be the caſe, it is a misfortune to all who are connected with him," replied Carloſtein, "but moſt of all to himſelf."

"But it ought to be a misfortune to himſelf only," ſaid Seidlits, "not to her who has the ſweeteſt temper on earth; and I am determined that his ill humour ſhall not make my ſiſter unhappy.—The ſame world ſhall not contain me and the man who behaves ill to Laura Seidlits.—I'll tell him ſo this very day."

"Have you any particular inſtance of ill uſage to complain of?" ſaid Carloſtein.

"Why there is this woman," replied Seidlits, "this Nerina, with whom he paſſes ſo much of his time; *that* muſt be mortifying to my ſiſter, and ſhews what a brute he is; and beſides, his general manner to her is not kind and attentive as it ought to be, and as it ſhall be, *that* I am determined on."

"My dear Seidlits," ſaid Carloſtein, "what anſwer do you think you would

give to any man who ſhould tell you, that he did not approve of your keeping company with a particular woman, and that you ought to behave with more attention and kindneſs to your wife?"

"Well, if any man did ſpeak to me in that manner, I ſhould certainly give him ſatisfaction one way or other."

"That kind of ſatisfaction is eaſily given," ſaid Carloſtein; "but your object is to promote your ſiſter's happineſs?"

"My ſole object!" replied Seidlits.

"How would it be promoted ſhould you fall?" ſaid Carloſtein.

"Why, that kind of reaſoning might be applied with equal juſtneſs, if I ſhould demand ſatisfaction of the man who pulled me by the noſe. You might aſk what ſatisfaction I ſhould receive in caſe I myſelf ſhould fall. In ſhort," continued Seidlits, "this is not an affair of reaſoning, but of feeling; and, by Heavens! this fellow ſhall not behave improperly to *my* ſiſter."

"Since it is entirely an affair of feeling," replied Carloſtein, "ſome regard

ſhould be paid to the feelings of her who is chiefly concerned. Has your ſiſter ever complained of her huſband, or given you any hint of his having treated her ill?"

"You know," replied Seidlits, "of what heavenly mildneſs her diſpoſition is; ſhe will bear much without complaining."

"But as ſhe has never mentioned any thing in the nature of complaint to you," ſaid Carloſtein, "it is poſſible that part of what you ſuſpect is groundleſs; and if ſhe has reaſon to complain of ſome things, it is probable that ſhe conſiders them of far leſs moment than what ſhe would ſuffer by your quarrelling with her huſband. On the whole, it is clear that you ought to have a little patience, till it is more evident that your ſuſpicions are well founded, and then I ſhall be happy to concur with you in taking the moſt likely meaſures for your ſiſter's relief."

Although Seidlits remained convinced that his ſiſter had cauſe to complain of her huſband's conduct, yet Carloſtein at length

obtained his promiſe that he would not ſpeak on the ſubject to Zeluco, without firſt acquainting his friend.

When Carloſtein gave an account of this converſation to Laura, notwithſtanding his ſoftening ſome parts of it, ſhe continued exceedingly apprehenſive of ſome fatal ſcene between her huſband and brother. She again mentioned her apprehenſions to Carloſtein in the preſence of Signora Sporza, and knowing that it was part of their plan to viſit Sicily before their return to Germany, ſhe expreſſed her wiſhes that Carloſtein would prevail on her brother to ſet out with him immediately.

As at this time Laura's ſpirits were much dejected, and as ſhe found in the company of her brother and Carloſtein the only cordial which could raiſe or ſupport them, nothing but the affection which ſhe had for her brother, and the dread of his being involved in a quarrel with her huſband, could have enabled her to reſiſt the arguments which the Baron could not help urging againſt their leaving Naples till ſhe

ſhe ſhould recover from her lying-in, and in this he was aſſiſted by Signora Sporza.

Laura's own inclinations were on the ſame ſide with the eloquence of Carloſtein, yet ſhe had the firmneſs to perſevere in her requeſt that they would depart; ſhe even uſed the circumſtance of her being ſoon to be confined as a freſh argument: "For ſince during my confinement I cannot ſee my friends at any rate," ſaid ſhe, "it is beſt that you ſeize that interval for your tour; and by the time you return, I ſhall be ſufficiently well to enjoy your company."

Carloſtein therefore gave up the point, and prevailed on Seidlits to adopt the meaſure which his ſiſter had propoſed; "For you muſt recollect," ſaid he to Captain Seidlits, "the preſent ſtate of your ſiſter's health; whatever you may *ultimately* reſolve on, therefore, every altercation between you and Zeluco muſt be avoided at preſent, as you would avoid her deſtruction."

Their journey was agreed on; Mr. N—, who had talked of accompanying them, was prevented; but he ſupped in company

with them and Signora Sporza at Madame de Seidlits's the night preceding their departure. Laura endeavoured to be cheerful, partly to hide her concern for the abſence of Carloſtein, and partly to convince her brother that ſhe was not ſo unhappy as he imagined. The effort was ſuperior to her ſtrength of mind; for although ſhe bid adieu to her brother with compoſure, ſhe trembled and turned pale when Carloſtein took leave of her. This was obſerved by Mr. N——, who ſtood near him; and it was not the firſt time that he had remarked Laura's partiality for the Baron—which had no other effect on the generous mind of this gentleman, than increaſing the regard he had for Carloſtein. His own attachment to Laura had never exceeded the limits of friendſhip and high eſteem; he had from their firſt acquaintance endeavoured to guard againſt a paſſion for a woman of a different country and religion from his own. Had Laura betrayed any ſymptoms of affection for him, it is more than probable his precautions would have

have been vain; for when a man approves greatly of a woman's character and perſon, nothing is ſo likely to kindle approbation into love, as his imagining that love already exiſts within her breaſt towards him. But Mr. N—— was too free from vanity, and had too much diſcernment, not to perceive that Laura's regard for him was unmixed with paſſion; and the ſame diſcernment enabled him to perceive that her attachment to Carloſtein was pure love.

CHAP. LXXXII.

Her tongue bewitch'd as oddly as her eyes,
Leſs wit than mimic, more a wit than wiſe.
POPE.

THE morning on which he left Naples Captain Seidlits called once more on his ſiſter. She had paſſed an unquiet night: dejection and ſorrow were ſtrongly marked on her countenance. Seidlits was affected in a manner unuſual to him; while he embraced her, on taking leave, tears were in the eyes of both. Zeluco unexpectedly entered the room at that inſtant; Seidlits was fretted, and confuſed at this intruſion; he was abaſhed at being ſeen in tears, which he conſidered as a weakneſs unbecoming of a ſoldier. He ſaluted Zeluco in an embarraſſed and abrupt manner, and hurried to Carloſtein, with whom he immediately embarked for Sicily.

Laura

Laura continued weeping for a conſiderable time after her brother left the room, which prevented her remarking that Zeluco was diſpleaſed at the ſcene of which he had been an unexpected witneſs. His ill humour was indeed ſo habitual, that it might have made little impreſſion on her although ſhe had.

Carloſtein and Seidlits being gone, and Laura far advanced in her pregnancy, ſhe never went abroad but for a ſhort airing, or to paſs a few hours with her mother, or at Signora Sporza's, where ſhe ſometimes met with Mr. N——, for whom ſhe always felt and avowed great eſteem.

Zeluco's time was almoſt entirely dedicated to Nerina, whoſe caprices increaſed in proportion to her influence over him, which, although they were generally directed to ſome intereſted point, were never carried farther than his temper, the variations of which ſhe attentively watched, could bear.

All her whims and caprices indeed were ſo completely under her command, and

managed with ſuch addreſs, that what has diſguſted many lovers with their miſtreſſes, were by her made to operate as ſtimulants to the paſſion of Zeluco when it ſeemed to languiſh.

She poſſeſſed the power of amuſing in an extraordinary degree; this ſhe exerciſed ſometimes in a manner that would have ſhocked a mind more delicate than that of Zeluco, but was admirably adapted to his; he accordingly had frequent recourſe to it againſt the dæmons of *ennui* and remorſe, who haunted him alternately.

Nerina never mentioned Laura without the intention of turning her into ridicule, or inſinuating ſomething to her diſadvantage, with frequent alluſions to her altered ſhape, and the complaints incident to women in her ſituation.

Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza were alſo the frequent butts of her ſarcaſms; the firſt ſhe repreſented as an antiquated coquet, who, calling every auxiliary of the toilette in ſupport of her faded charms, ſtill attempted freſh conqueſts. "I am told,"

told," ſaid Nerina, "that the ridiculous old Lady ſtuns the ears of her yawning gueſts with the enumeration of her German admirers, Landgraves, Margraves, and Barons without number. But, my dear Sir, you ought really to give a hint to the imprudent old gentlewoman, not to indulge her vanity at the expence of her teeth; for you may depend upon it, the pronunciation of thoſe horrid names is one cauſe of their being ſo very looſe,"

Signora Sporza ſhe repreſented as a woman of intrigue, who, finding that two of her poor relations hung a little heavy on her hands, had fobb'd off one of them upon him as a wife, and thus had ſecured a comfortable maintenance for both.

Her caricaturas were given with ſuch exquiſite pantomime and mimickry as might entertain thoſe who were not acquainted with the characters of the perſons ſhe intended to ridicule, but muſt have ſhocked every perſon of candour who was.

In eſtabliſhing the influence which Nerina wiſhed to retain over Zeluco, the force

of

of habit was now joined to the power of amuſing. Having accuſtomed himſelf to go to her at certain hours, he knew not how to fill up thoſe hours without her, and the deſire of viſiting her returned periodically. In the midſt of apparent levity, and ſeeming want of deſign, ſhe obſerved a predetermined plan in moſt parts of her conduct to him; and often when he imagined her entirely vacant, or occupied in ſome very frivolous amuſement, ſhe was endeavouring to penetrate into his ſentiments reſpecting certain ſubjects which ſhe thought he might naturally wiſh to conceal from her. In conſequence of this, it ſtruck her, that notwithſtanding Zeluco's paſſion for Laura was greatly cooled, and in ſpite of the pains ſhe had taken to make her ridiculous in his eyes, yet he ſtill retained a high eſteem for her character. Indications of this, to the infinite mortification of Nerina, broke from him unintentionally ſometimes, at the very inſtant when ſhe was labouring to give him a very different impreſſion. As Nerina was

doubtful

doubtful whether ſhe herſelf had any hold of Zeluco by this ſentiment of eſteem, ſhe was determined not to leave it in the poſſeſſion of the woman whom ſhe conſidered as her enemy. She ſecretly informed herſelf, therefore, of Laura's conduct and manner of paſſing her time, with a view to diſcover ſome ground upon which a fabric of falſehood injurious to the character of Laura might be raiſed; and after having for ſome time purſued theſe reſearches, by the means of her ſpies and other agents, without ſucceſs, ſhe at laſt formed one of the moſt horrid projects that ever entered into the head of a profligate woman. The ſhocking idea ſuggeſted itſelf to her, in conſequence of her having obſerved, that, of late, Zeluco diſplayed a particular diſlike to Captain Seidlits, and of his mentioning to her ſomething of his wife's grief at parting with her brother, and endeavouring to ridicule the pathetic manner in which they had taken leave of each other.

CHAP. LXXXIII.

Obliqua invidia, ſtimuliſque agitabat amaris.
VIRG.

IN due time, however, Laura was ſafely delivered of a ſon; and as her huſband ſeldom went near her, even to aſk how ſhe did, ſhe had a very quick and complete recovery; in little more than a month after her delivery, ſhe was at church, where Nerina had the mortification of ſeeing her with undiminiſhed beauty, and in all the grace of elegant ſimplicity. She could not but obſerve that Laura attracted the regard and commanded the admiration of all the ſpectators, while ſhe herſelf, although oſtentatiouſly dreſſed, was paſſed over without attention by the eyes of thoſe who did not know her, and with looks of diſdain by thoſe who did. Had Nerina been aware of

of Laura's coming, ſhe would have avoided ſuch an occaſion of compariſon, well knowing that the ſentiments of the ſpectators would be againſt her. This incident, however, redoubled her malice againſt Laura, particularly as it happened at a time when ſhe was already fretted at Laura's having a ſon; and the apprehenſion that he might be the means of turning the heart of Zeluco from herſelf to his wife.

In proſecution of her plan, Nerina ſometimes introduced the mention of Captain Seidlits, remarking with a careleſs and undeſigning air, that he was conſidered by many people as the handſomeſt man in Naples.

Zeluco laughed at this, ſaying, That they were no great judges of male beauty who harboured ſuch an opinion.

"Yet in the opinion of moſt people," ſaid Nerina, "they are the *beſt* judges; for you may think what you pleaſe, but this is a very general notion among the ladies."

"I did not know before," ſaid Zeluco, "that the proportions of a porter, and the

ſtrut

ſtrut of a Pruſſian ſerjeant, had been ſo much to their taſte."

"The blunt frankneſs of his manner is certainly better adapted to a camp than a drawing-room," rejoined Nerina, "yet he undoubtedly is a very great favourite with the Neapolitan ladies; many of whom are thought to have cultivated the acquaintance of your wife, and ſung her praiſes wherever there was a likelihood of their being repeated, for no other reaſon, than that they might be on a good footing with him; for his great affection for his ſiſter, and her influence with him, are pretty generally known."

Theſe hints, however, had no other immediate effect, than drawing from Zeluco ſome ſarcaſms againſt the perſon or addreſs of Captain Seidlits.

In the mean time, the infant increaſed in ſtrength and beauty, and began to diſtinguiſh objects; and one day in particular, being dandled by the nurſe, he ſmiled in the face of Zeluco. Hard of heart and unfeeling as he was, the ſmiles of his child melted

melted him into tenderneſs.—He caught the infant in his arms, and, yielding to the power of nature, he indulged the affection of a father.

The pleaſure of thoſe ſenſations made ſo ſtrong an impreſſion, that he could not refrain from praiſing the beauty of the child in the preſence of Nerina.

Theſe praiſes from him were gall and wormwood to her; they made her for a moment forget her uſual caution, and riſk diſcovering her aim by precipitation.

"The child muſt of courſe be ſtrong and handſome," ſaid ſhe; "for I hear he is the expreſs image of Captain Seidlits."—"Captain Seidlits!" repeated Zeluco.

"Yes," rejoined ſhe, with a careleſs air, "nothing can be more natural; the Captain being *half*-brother to the child's mother."

"I never remarked any ſuch reſemblance," ſaid Zeluco, after a conſiderable pauſe.

"No!" ſaid Nerina; "then perhaps there is nothing in it; and all thoſe who

have been ſtruck with the likeneſs, muſt be miſtaken."

Perceiving that her inſinuation had taken effect, with an air of careleſs levity, ſhe turned the diſcourſe to other ſubjects; Zeluco did not attempt to bring it back to this, but was at intervals thoughtful and muſing through the reſt of the evening; of this Nerina took no notice, but by gay and licentious ſongs, by mimickry and a thouſand playful tricks, ſeemed intent on nothing but amuſing herſelf and him.

The poiſon which this artful woman thus adminiſtered continued to ferment in the mind of Zeluco, and occupied his thoughts by day and night. A long familiarity with vice, and every ſpecies of profligacy, made that appear probable to him, which to a man of integrity would ſeem next to impoſſible.

He now called to his remembrance many circumſtances in themſelves frivolous, and which had made no impreſſion when they occurred, but which now added ſtrength to the horrid inſinuations of Nerina. The mutual regard which had always appeared between

tween Laura and her brother—their ſequeſtered walks at the firſt arrival of Seidlits—his frequent viſits to his ſiſter when alone—her eagerneſs to have him inſtead of Carloſtein in the carriage with her when they returned from Baia—their mutual tenderneſs when they laſt parted, the confuſion which Seidlits had betrayed, and his abrupt departure on Zeluco's entering the room—and finally, the reſemblance which he imagined had ſtruck ſo many people between Captain Seidlits and the child. He alſo recollected, that although his marriage took place five weeks before Seidlits arrived at Naples, yet the child was not born till near ten months after that period.

To thoſe circumſtances a ridiculous incident gave a degree of ſupport, which, in the diſturbed imagination of Zeluco, amounted to full proof.

He entered the nurſery one day when he knew that Laura was not there; after talking a little to the nurſe about the child, he had the weakneſs to ſay, for the inſinuations of Nerina deprived him of cool re-

flection, he had the weakneſs to ſay to the nurſe, "Which of your Lady's relations do you think this child reſembles moſt?".

"La, Sir," replied the nurſe, "why, his own father, ſure."

"Idiot, which of my wife's *relations*, I ſay?" added Zeluco.

Laura's maid, who was preſent, wiſhing to correct the nurſe's want of accuracy, interpoſed, ſaying, "Your excellency, you know, is my Lady's relation by marriage, though not by blood."

"Who deſired you to interfere, miſtreſs?" ſaid Zeluco, angrily; then turning to the nurſe, he reſumed: "Do you not think he is like his uncle Captain Seidlits?"

"Jeſu, Maria!" cried the nurſe, "What makes your excellency think ſo?"

"Speak without evaſion, woman," exclaimed Zeluco. "Do you not think him like my wife's brother, Captain Seidlits?"

"O Lord, yes, an't pleaſe your excellency," cried the nurſe, terrified at his manner; "very like Captain Seidlits."

"You

"You have heard many people remark it," continued he; "have you not?"

"A great many indeed," cried the nurſe, who began now to think, that as Seidlits was a ſtately man, Zeluco was flattered by his child being thought like him; beſides, ſhe was ſo flurried by his paſſionate manner of queſtioning, that ſhe would have echoed back whatever queſtion he could have aſked.

But Laura's maid, who had been ſilenced at the beginning, could no longer reſtrain herſelf; for ſhe had ſuſpected Zeluco of jealouſy ever ſince the adventure of the mirror; and imagined that his preſent queſtioning proceeded from the ſame motive.

"How dare you utter ſuch a horrid falſehood," cried the maid to the nurſe, "you baſe lying huſſy, you?"

"It is you who are a lying huſſy," retorted the nurſe.

"Who did you ever hear ſay ſuch a thing?" ſaid the maid.

The nurſe meant to injure Laura no more than the maid; but was ſo piqued at the maid's attack, and at her own veracity's being called in queſtion, that ſhe was ready to have ſupported the lie ſhe had been frightened into, by her ſolemn oath, rather than have yielded the point to the maid.

"Who did I ever hear ſay it? I have heard a hundred," ſaid the nurſe boldly.

"A hundred! O wretch!" cried the maid, turning up her eyes.

"Ay, a thouſand, ten thouſand," continued the nurſe.

"You never did, you never could," exclaimed the maid, "for the child reſembles his own father."

"That does not prevent his being exceedingly like Captain Seidlits," continued the nurſe; "and I am convinced, if he lives, that he will be as ſtately a man to the full."

"Hold your ſcandalous tongue," vociferated the maid, "you vile, worthleſs, lying wretch; the child reſembles no man but my maſter."

"He

"He is ten thouſand times liker Captain Seidlits," cried the nurſe, in a violent rage; "and all the world think ſo, and ſay ſo."

"All the world!" exclaimed the maid, lifting her eyes and arms.

"Yes, all the world," repeated the nurſe; "and if you will only call them into the room, they will tell you ſo to your face."

Zeluco withdrew, frowning and biting his lips. Madame de Seidlits with Laura came into the room ſoon after, and the altercation ceaſed.

CHAP. LXXXIV.

The Danger of vicious Confidences—Indignation of Laura.

IN his preſent ſtate of mind, Zeluco might naturally have queſtioned his confidential valet on the ſubject, to know what he had remarked reſpecting the behaviour of Laura and her brother; but this man was no longer on the ſame footing with him that he had formerly been.

The valet had long beheld with indignation the influence which Nerina gained with his maſter, and endeavoured to counteract it by every means in his power; but in beſieging the heart and retaining the favour of a perſon of Zeluco's character, Nerina was a more ſkilful engineer than the valet; beſides, ſhe made uſe of more powerful artillery than he was poſſeſſed of.

Nerina

Nerina therefore, having completely gained the aſcendency, did not chuſe that Zeluco ſhould have an old confidential ſervant about him, who was not devoted to her intereſt. She took every opportunity of diſguſting the maſter with this man, while by many underhand means ſhe endeavoured to render the man equally tired of the maſter; pretending all the while that ſhe was the valet's friend.

The fellow was not ſo eaſily duped as ſhe imagined; convinced of her enmity, deſpairing of regaining the favour of Zeluco, and prompted by hatred to both, he waited ſecretly on Signora Sporza, gave her a circumſtantial account of the pretended robbers who had attacked Laura and her on their return from Mount Veſuvius; and aſſured her that he himſelf had charged the piſtols with powder only, but when it appeared from Zeluco's wound, that one of them had been loaded with ball, he ſaid, he recollected that in a ſmall box in his maſter's writing-deſk, he had ſeen four piſtol bullets the day immediately preceding

ing the expedition; and that on examining the ſame box at his return, he found only two, from which he concluded that Zeluco had ſecretly put the other brace into the piſtol delivered to the ſervant, with an intention no doubt of murdering Signora Sporza, for he had given the ſervant particular directions to fire it in her face: That the wounding of Zeluco, therefore, was intirely accidental, owing to the hurry of the ſervant, and the balls having miſſed her.

The valet finiſhed his narrative, by declaring, that his motive in giving her this information, was good-will to Signora Sporza, againſt whom Zeluco ſtill retained his ancient malice; and a regard for Laura's ſafety, whoſe life, he ſaid, was alſo in danger from a huſband ſo very wicked, and who was entirely under the dominion of a woman, more wicked, if poſſible, than himſelf.

After rewarding the man for his intelligence, Signora Sporza enjoined him to mention it to no other perſon, but to continue to behave to his maſter as uſual, that there might

might be no ſuſpicion of an underſtanding between the valet and her; and to remain quite inactive, till ſhe had time to conſult with her friends what meaſures ſhould be adopted, of which the valet ſhould receive timely notice; and he might rely on being ſtill more liberally rewarded.

Signora Sporza communicated the whole of this man's narrative to Laura, whom it ſurpriſed and ſhocked exceedingly; for bad as her opinion was of her huſband's diſpoſition, ſhe never had thought him capable of this degree of wickedneſs. She was filled likewiſe with indignation at the hiſtory of the ſham attack by which her mother, and ſhe herſelf, had been in ſome meaſure impoſed upon, while ſhe felt the greateſt contempt for the man who was obliged to have recourſe to ſuch a pitiful trick, to throw a falſe luſtre on his character.

Signora Sporza gave it as her opinion, that Laura ſhould write to her brother, preſs his immediate return, throw herſelf into his protection, and ſeparate for ever

from

from her horrid huſband; adding, that his attachment to Nerina, and fear of Captain Seidlits, would induce him to agree to the ſeparation on proper terms. But Laura, who laid little ſtreſs on what Signora Sporza meant by *terms*, felt herſelf under great difficulty in determining how to proceed; for ſhe thought her brother a very improper negociator with Zeluco: and then, although ſhe had no doubt of her huſband's willingneſs to ſeparate from her, ſhe was afraid he might object to her having the child, from whom ſhe could not without pain be abſent, and whom ſhe could not without horror abandon to the immediate care and future example of ſuch a father.

After much reflection ſhe wrote to her brother, expreſſing a deſire of his ſpeedy return, but not in the moſt urgent terms; nor did ſhe aſſign any particular reaſon, but requeſted that he would incloſe his anſwer under cover to Signora Sporza. When Laura had finiſhed her letter, ſhe told her friend, that at her brother's return ſhe would explain her views to him

in the moſt cautious manner, and in the preſence of his friend the Baron Carloſtein.

She determined at the ſame time, that in caſe her huſband conſented to leave the child even for a few years under her care after the ſeparation took place, that ſhe would inſiſt on Carloſtein's leaving Naples; and if he refuſed, ſhe reſolved never after to admit his viſits, even in the company of her mother or brother. She wiſhed, however, that Carloſtein ſhould remain till every thing regarding the ſeparation was ſettled, becauſe he would be a check to the impetuoſity of her brother; and alſo becauſe ſhe hoped that through his influence with her huſband, he would prevail on him to agree to the article neareſt her heart, of leaving the child to her own care and management.

Self-ſufficiency was no part of this amiable woman's character, however virtuous her inclinations were; ſhe was conſcious of a partiality for Carloſtein, which convinced her that her ſafeſt courſe was to forego the pleaſure of his company entirely.

In the mean while the heart of Zeluco glowed with rage againſt Laura and Seidlits, and he revolved in his mind various plans of revenge; but as his wrath was deadly, he wiſhed to adopt ſuch an one as would at once ſatiate his vengeance and ſecure his ſafety.

The laſt he thought inconſiſtent with his making Nerina a confident of his meaſures; for in ſpite of his partiality for her, and his believing that ſhe had a great deal for him, he knew that this might not always be the caſe, and therefore he meditated ſome plan of revenge which required not her aſſiſtance, and which he meant to poſtpone till the return of Seidlits, being determined to involve both the brother and ſiſter in the ſame ruin.

As he imagined, however, that he ſhould need an accomplice for ſome part at leaſt of the ſcheme, he began to ſooth his valet, and behave in a more confidential manner to him, with a view to conciliate matters; but this fellow having been ſeduced into vice and not originally a villain, was not

ſufficiently a hypocrite to deceive his maſter. Zeluco perceived through his affected obſequiouſneſs, that the man was diſobliged, and not to be truſted; although he had never been the confident of his maſter in any thing of ſo much importance as that which now occupied his thoughts, yet Zeluco was conſcious that this man was acquainted with certain parts of his conduct which he would not like to have revealed to the world. On obſerving therefore the mutinous ſtate of his valet's mind, which he had overlooked before, he determined to keep him in as good humour as he could till Seidlits returned, and then ſend him on ſome pretext to Sicily, where he knew how to have him diſpoſed of in a manner more agreeable to his own ſafety,

CHAP. LXXXV.

He retir'd unſeen,
To brood in ſecret on his gather'd ſpleen,
And methodiſe revenge. DRYDEN.

THE mind of Zeluco being engroſſed with theſe deſperate purpoſes, he paſſed much of his time in ſolitude and meditation.

As he walked early one morning towards the hill of Pauſilippo, he obſerved two men coming out of the grotto: they ſeemed converſing together when Zeluco firſt ſaw them; but as he approached, one fell behind the other, and a little to one ſide. As he who was moſt advanced drew near, Zeluco recogniſed him for an old acquaintance; his name was Bertram, the ſon of a clergyman of Geneva, who, from a ſpirit of adventure to which the natives of that city are much addicted, had travelled into Spain,

Spain, to viſit a relation who was ſecretary to an ambaſſador at the court of Madrid, through whoſe intereſt this young man got a commiſſion in the Spaniſh ſervice. Zeluco had been ſeveral times in company with him at Madrid; and particularly once a ſhort time before Zeluco himſelf left that city, he had met Bertram at a gaming houſe, and ſtript him of all his money: this circumſtance ſerved to make each recollect the other. After the uſual compliments, "You were very unfortunate the laſt night we were in company together," ſaid Zeluco.

"It was thought ſo," anſwered Bertram.

"I am much afraid that what I won put you to much inconveniency," rejoined Zeluco.

"Such inconveniencies muſt ſometimes be expected by thoſe who play," ſaid Bertram.

"You have quitted the Spaniſh ſervice, I preſume," reſumed Zeluco.

"I have," ſaid the other.

"You do not think of leaving Naples ſoon?"

"It is not in my power to leave it immediately," ſaid Bertram.

"How ſo?"

"Why," continued Bertram, with a ſmile; "You find me in the condition in which you left me—without money;—in ſhort, I have overſhot my credit, and I now wait for a ſmall remittance to enable me to leave this place."

Zeluco then told him he ſhould be happy to accommodate him in whatever ſum he needed; "I am engaged this morning." added he, "but if you will walk a little after it is duſk in the ſquare before the palace, I will ſoon join you, and conduct you to a place where we may have a cheerful glaſs together; I am impatient to hear your adventures ſince we parted,"

Bertram promiſed to meet him at the time and place appointed. They then parted, and each continued his walk; but Zeluco immediately turning, ſaid to Bertram,

"You

"You had beſt not mention my name, nor hint to any perſon that we are acquainted; the reaſon of this caution you will know hereafter; but in the mean time, I can only tell you, it will not be in my power to ſerve you as I intend, if you do."

Bertram aſſured him he would not, and they again took leave of each other.

Zeluco remembered, that this Bertram was conſidered at the time he knew him, as a young fellow of deſperate fortune and devoted to gaming, but reſpected on account of the preſence of mind and intrepidity with which he had extricated himſelf from a very hazardous adventure, in which he was involved before Zeluco arrived at Madrid, and which was much talked of at the time. Zeluco had heard no more of him after he himſelf left Spain, but imagined he was ruined by play, and had now become an adventurer living by his wits, and ready for any deſperate enterpriſe in which there was a likelihood of bettering his fortune. What added ſtrength to his conjectures was, his having remarked

the man who was in converſation with Bertram before Zeluco joined him: this man Zeluco was perſuaded he had ſeen with a chain around his leg, working among the malefactors at Caſſerta: which very ſuſpicious circumſtance, and the fellow's retiring and ſtanding aloof, while Bertram and he converſed, convineed Zeluco that his old acquaintance was juſt ſuch a perſon as he was in want of. He had not fully determined in what manner he ſhould employ him, but a variety of disjointed ideas of vengeful import floated in his imagination; and he much wiſhed to attach to his views a man ſuch as he took Bertram to be, needy, daring, and profligate; but he knew that the aid he expected from him was of a nature which made it highly expedient both for his own ſafety and that of his auxiliary, that their acquaintance with each other ſhould not be known, for which reaſon he was impatient till they ſeparated, leſt they ſhould be obſerved converſing.

CHAP. LXXXVI.

——Thou haſt been
As one, in ſuffering all, that ſuffers nothing;
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Haſt ta'en with equal thanks; and bleſt are thoſe,
Whoſe wit and judgment are ſo well commingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To ſound what ſtop ſhe pleaſe. SHAKESPEARE.

AT the time appointed, Bertram walked before the palace gate, and was ſoon joined by Zeluco, wrapped in a Portugueſe cloak, who deſiring him to follow, conducted him through various winding alleys, to the door of a detached houſe, which, on ringing a bell, ſeemed to open of itſelf, for nobody appeared; but Zeluco, after carefully ſhutting the door, led Bertram into a room commodiouſly fitted up, with a cold collation and various kinds of wine on the table.

This apartment Zeluco kept for the purpoſe of entertaining ſuch friends as it was inexpedient to invite to his own houſe. Nerina and others had frequently met him here:—the ſervants were previouſly inſtructed what they ſhould provide; and the gueſts were ſerved with whatever they needed, by the means of a turning cupboard, ſuch as is uſed in convents.

"I hate being incommoded with ſervants," ſaid Zeluco, "particularly on an occaſion of this kind, when I am to enjoy a confidential converſation with an old friend. I have therefore taken care that no domeſtic ſhall interrupt us.—Pray help yourſelf to what you like."

After they had ſupped and drank a few glaſſes of wine—"I am much afraid," ſaid Zeluco, "that the four hundred dollars I won from you at Madrid put you to great inconveniency, for I remember I was afterwards informed you were in debt at that time."

"I was indeed," ſaid Bertram.

"Well

"Well then, I hope you ſoon after won double the ſum," ſaid Zeluco.

"I have never played ſince," anſwered Bertram.

"Never!" cried Zeluco.

"Never;" replied Bertram.

"How did you contrive to pay your debts then," ſaid Zeluco.

"A brother officer, hearing of my ill luck, paid me an old debt which I had deſpaired of;—this helped me greatly;—living on half my pay for ſeveral months did the reſt; at laſt I had the pleaſure of paying all my debts to the laſt farthing."

"It is next to impoſſible," ſaid Zeluco, "for an officer in the Spaniſh ſervice, of the rank you then were, to live on his full pay; I cannot conceive how you contrived to exiſt on the half."

"More difficult things may be performed by thoſe who are reſolved to be juſt," replied Bertram; "I was under the neceſſity of living very poorly to be ſure; but if I had not, ſome of my creditors,

who were poor trades-people, muſt have ſtarved."

And what if they had? thought Zeluco; and then ſaying aloud, "So to prevent their ſtarving, you half ſtarved yourſelf?"

"Not quite ſo, Signor," replied Bertram; "though to be ſure my table was not ſumptuous."

"This muſt have been a very cruel courſe of equity, however," ſaid Zeluco.

"I have been repaid by the ſatisfaction it has afforded me ſince," replied Bertram.

"I dare ſwear you often curſed me in your heart," ſaid Zeluco.

"A curſe has ſometimes eſcaped my lips," ſaid Bertram; "but I do not remember my having ever curſed any body in my heart."

"I ſhould forgive you if you had.—The loſs of four hundred dollars to one in your circumſtances was a dreadful misfortune," added Zeluco.

"I hope they were of ſervice to you," ſaid Bertram; "for their loſs was one of the

the luckieſt things that ever happened to me. I was obliged to pinch ſo hard to make it up, that I have thought myſelf in affluence ever ſince."

"You are a philoſopher," ſaid Zeluco, "and bear misfortunes with great fortitude."

"I have hardly ever had any to bear," ſaid Bertram.

"I am ſurpriſed to hear you ſay ſo," rejoined Zeluco; "becauſe I was told that the four hundred dollars which I won, was but the concluſion of a very perſevering run of ill fortune—I heard you loſt near ſeven thouſand dollars in the ſpace of a month."

"Thereabout," ſaid Bertram.

"And what, in the devil's name, do you call that?" ſaid Zeluco.—"Surely a man in the ſituation you then were, who loſes ſuch a ſum in the courſe of a month's play, muſt think himſelf very unfortunate."

"Not if he previouſly won it all in the courſe of a week's play," replied Bertram, "which was preciſely my caſe.—I could never

never have had the misfortune to loſe ſeven thouſand dollars, if I had not firſt had the good fortune to win them."

"That is not the uſual way in which men calculate their own misfortunes," ſaid Zeluco.

"It is the fair way, however," rejoined Bertram; "for the moſt fortunate man that ever exiſted will be proved to be unfortunate, if you throw out all the lucky incidents of his life, and leave the unlucky behind: but I had one piece of good fortune which I have not mentioned."

"What was that?" ſaid Zeluco.

"Out of the firſt thouſand dollars I remitted ſeven hundred to my father."

"The devil you did," cried Zeluco.

"Yes," ſaid Bertram, "I thank Heaven, I put that out of the power of chance."

"The old boy I hope repaid you three-fold?" ſaid Zeluco.

"Ay, ten-fold," replied Bertram; "for he informed me by the next poſt that it had

had enabled him to clear off ſome debts that diſtreſſed him exceedingly."

"But after your loſs with me." ſaid Zeluco, "I am ſurpriſed you never again tried your fortune at play."

"It required all my fortitude to abſtain from it," ſaid Bertram; "for although deep play is little known among the citizens of Geneva, I was early led into it by a young Engliſhman with whom I was intimate before I left that city. I continued to play with uncommon ſucceſs after I went to Madrid. This propenſity grew into a paſſion, and I was thoughtleſs and unjuſt enough to riſk in play with you the money which I had appropriated for the diſcharge of what I owed to trades-people and others, for which as I felt a degree of remorſe which I never before experienced, I determined to effect the diſcharge of my debts by the moſt rigid œconomy; yet I muſt own I was often ſtrongly tempted to try my fortune once more at play; for it occurred to me that by a few ſucceſsful throws of the dice I might abridge many lingering months

months of œconomy; but I reflected on the other hand, that in caſe I ſhould loſe, it would be at the expence of thoſe poor creditors whom, by a ſtrict adherence to my plan of œconomy, it was in my power to pay.—While I was balancing this matter in my mind, I received a letter from my father, which decided the point. I paid the money I had in my hands equally among my creditors, and directly after began my courſe of œconomy, in which I perſevered till I was entirely free from debt; and I have never played, nor been in debt ſince."

"Your father's letter muſt have contained very forcible reaſoning," ſaid Zeluco, "to produce ſuch an effect."

"It contained a recapitulation of thoſe principles which he had inſtilled into my mind in my childhood; an adherence to which has been the ſource of all the comfort I have had in life, and from which I never deviated, in the ſmalleſt degree, without remorſe."

"I ſhould

"I ſhould be glad to ſee this powerful epiſtle, or hear what you can recollect of it," ſaid Zeluco.

"I am ſorry I have it not about me," ſaid Bertram; "for there is a peculiar energy in my father's ſtyle to which my memory cannot do juſtice. The letter in queſtion was written in conſequence of his having heard that I was patroniſed by a certain man in power, from whom I had reaſon to expect promotion; from this he took occaſion to remind me, that the favour of men was precarious, and often guided by caprice; that they might ſmile upon me to-day, and neglect me to-morrow, however uniformly zealous I might be to retain their good-will; but he earneſtly intreated me to make it my chief ſtudy to find favour in the eyes of my Creator, in whom there is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning."

"Your father was a clergyman, no doubt," ſaid Zeluco, ſtifling a laugh.

"He was," replied Bertram, "and there never was a worthier."

"But

"But did he give you any hint how you were to become a favourite? I mean," continued Zeluco, "beſides the old way by devotion and religious ceremonies."

"My father's devotion lay in his heart," ſaid Bertram, "and was little embarraſſed with ceremonies."

"Well then," continued Zeluco, "how were you to carry your point?"

"By the duties of humanity and benevolence to my fellow-creatures, and by the moſt ſtrict integrity; he recommended particularly that I ſhould liſten to the dictates of conſcience, which he called the voice of God, and which, even in this life, puniſhes and rewards in a certain degree, according to our conduct. If ever,"—continued Bertram, giving the words of his father's letter, "If ever, my ſon, you ſhould feel a propenſity to do an unfair thing, overcome it immediately, for no earthly conſideration can make it your intereſt.—Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but this truth ſhall remain, *Whatſoever a man ſoweth that he ſhall reap*. Therefore, my dear Bertram, never,

never, O never, be ſuch a fool as to be a knave."

Bertram repeated this part of the letter with unuſual fervour, and Zeluco, who was diſpoſed to turn the whole into ridicule, had certain ſenſations which ſpoilt his inclination to mirth. He remained for ſome time in a kind of reverie; then rouſing himſelf, he looked at Bertram, ſaying, "Well, Sir, what happened next?"

"I told you," reſumed Bertram, "that before I read this admonition, my conſcience had been whiſpering that it was not quite fair in me to riſk the money which the poor trades-people ſtood ſo much in need of; yet my avarice, or love of play, whichever you pleaſe, was endeavouring to ſilence theſe whiſpers with all the ſophiſtry they could muſter. But I thank God, my father's letter coming to the aid of conſcience, I had the ſtrength to act as I did."

By this time Zeluco plainly perceived that his old acquaintance was a very different kind of man from what he had ex-

pected, and would by no means ſuit his purpoſe; yet he felt a ſtrong curioſity to know the whole of his hiſtory. Zeluco therefore purſuing his inquiries; "Upon the whole, however," reſumed he, "you muſt have paſſed your time but uncomfortably in the Spaniſh ſervice?"

"Forgive me," replied Bertram; "after I had paid my debts my time was ſpent very cheerfully: my mind was free from ſelf-reproach; I poſſeſſed the friendſhip of ſome officers of ſenſe and honour; I enjoyed good health and good ſpirits, for I ſo contrived matters that my hours never hung on my hands, but were rather too ſhort for my employments; at night I fell aſleep, ſatisfied with the manner I had paſſed the day, and roſe every morning in ſpirits to perform my duty, and eager to improve my mind."

In the courſe of Zeluco's inquiries, Bertram informed him, that after remaining ſome years in the Spaniſh ſervice, a brother of his mother's had made him an advantageous propoſal, which would have enabled him

him to live comfortably in his own country, to which he had for ſome time felt a ſtrong deſire of returning; his father, and other relations, having written very preſſing letters to that purpoſe.

"You diſpoſed of your commiſſion, and returned accordingly?" ſaid Zeluco.

"I could not immediately indulge my own deſire, nor yield to the intreaties of my friends," replied Bertram; "becauſe there was a rumour of war, which ſome time after was verified; ſo I thought myſelf bound in honour to remain with the regiment, which ſoon was ſent on active ſervice."

"The extraordinary expence to which officers are put during war, would bear hard on you, who had no reſource but your pay," ſaid Zeluco.

"Very fortunately I had ſtudied mathematics and fortification at Geneva, and was frequently employed as an engineer, for which I received additional pay; this enabled me," replied Bertram, "to live as well as other officers of my rank, and to

remit a ſmall ſum of money to a female couſin of mine at Geneva, who had fallen under the diſpleaſure of her other relations."

"This *couſin* was young and handſome, no doubt," ſaid Zeluco.

"On the contrary," ſaid Bertram, "ſhe was an elderly woman, who never had been handſome, but had made a raſh marriage, diſapproved of by all her relations."

"What then intereſted you ſo much in her?" ſaid Zeluco; "her mental accompliſhments and virtue no doubt?"

"Her accompliſhments, poor woman," replied Bertram, "never were conſpicuous, and rumour was by no means favourable to her reputation in the other particular: in ſhort, her conduct afforded ſuch juſt grounds to her neareſt relations to abandon her, that I thought myſelf bound to befriend her, becauſe her other friends were either too angry or too much aſhamed of her to afford her any aſſiſtance."

"But pray," ſaid Zeluco, "when did you quit the Spaniſh ſervice?"

"At

"At the peace," replied the other, "when our regiment was ordered home."

"I remember to have heard that one of the captains of your regiment died on the paſſage; I ſuppoſe you were promoted to the company?"

"As I was the oldeſt lieutenant in the regiment, and had received two wounds in the ſervice, my friends flattered me I ſhould; but it was given to a young officer, nephew to a grandee of Spain."

"That was hard," ſaid Zeluco.

"Not particularly ſo," ſaid Bertram; "men of family have been allowed advantages in all ſervices; it can hardly be expected that they will ſerve otherwiſe; and if this young gentleman had been promoted to a company in any other regiment, it would have been equally hard on the oldeſt ſubaltern of that regiment."

"But probably this was a perſon of little or no merit," ſaid Zeluco.

"Forgive me," replied Bertram; "he is a very ſpirited young man, and I am

convinced from what I know of him, will prove an excellent officer."

"I ſhould have thought it damned hard, however, had I been in your place, that another ſhould carry away the whole reward due to me."

"He did not carry away the whole," ſaid Bertram; "for my behaviour on ſeveral occaſions was publicly approved of by the general, and praiſed by the whole army; my worthy father, and all my friends at Geneva, were informed of it, and rejoiced at the intelligence; beſides, I have the approbation of my own mind, I am conſcious of having been ever faithful to my truſt, and of having done my duty as a ſoldier. I had the happineſs of being loved by the ſoldiers as well as the officers of the regiment; many of the poor fellows were in tears when I left them. You muſt be ſenſible that this is a very pleaſing reward, and occaſions delightful ſenſations."

CHAP. LXXXVII.

A ſight of horror to the cruel wretch,
Who all day long in ſordid pleaſure roll'd,
Himſelf an uſeleſs load, has ſquander'd vile,
Upon his ſcoundrel train, what might have cheer'd
A drooping family of modeſt worth.
But to the generous ſtill improving mind,
That gives the hopeleſs heart to ſing for joy,
Diffuſing kind beneficence around;
To him the long review of order'd life
Is inward rapture. THOMSON.

AS Zeluco had never felt any of the delightful ſenſations which Bertram alluded to, he became a little impatient at this obſervation. "Well, well," ſaid he, "all this is mighty fine; but pray, my good Sir, what man was he whom I ſaw in converſation with you this morning, a little before I joined you?"

"That man," replied Bertram, ſmiling, "is juſt liberated from the gallies; he is my only attendant; if my ſuite be not nu-

merous, Signor, you muſt allow that it is ſelect."

"Liberated from the gallies!" cried Zeluco, with affected ſurpriſe.

"Yes, he was condemned to the gallies or to hard labour for life; it comes to the ſame thing; his laſt employment was at the royal works of Caſſerta with other ſlaves, ſome Chriſtian, ſome Mahometan."

"But how came *you* connected with him?" ſaid Zeluco.

"You ſhall hear," replied Bertram. "Having quitted the Spaniſh ſervice, and returned to my native city of Geneva, I lived in the moſt agreeable manner; and this poor man, a Savoyard by birth, was my footman; he is a good-natured creature, though not very clever, and I ſought no other: in the mean time, a worthleſs fellow, a Piedmonteſe, came to Geneva, and filling my ſervant's head with many fine ſtories concerning Italy, perſuaded him to quit my ſervice, and accompany him to that country, whither this Piedmonteſe was returning from France. They travelled together

gether to Milan, where failing in their endeavours to get into ſervice, and their money being exhauſted, they enliſted in an Auſtrian regiment, but had not been quite a month in this ſituation, when the Piedmonteſe was recogniſed by two Neapolitans, as a perſon who had been impriſoned above three years before at Naples, on an accuſation of robbery with aſſaſſination, but had made his eſcape from priſon. An information to this purpoſe being formally made, the Piedmonteſe was taken into cuſtody, and my poor Antonio, who had accompanied him to Milan, and enliſted at the ſame time, was ſeized and committed to priſon as his accomplice; for the witneſſes declared there had been two men engaged in the robbery, although only one had been apprehended at Naples.

" On a requiſition by the Neapolitan reſident at Milan, they were both ſent to Naples, but the Piedmonteſe had the dexterity to make his eſcape on the journey, and Antonio alone was brought priſoner to this city. The preſumptions againſt him

were greatly ſtrengthened by the circumſtance of a ſeal having been found in his pocket, which it was proved had belonged to the murdered perſon.

"It was in vain that the wretched Antonio told the manner he had made acquaintance with the Piedmonteſe;—that he had been in ſervice at Geneva at the time the murder was committed;—that he had bought the ſeal of his companion who had eſcaped; with many other particulars, all of them true, but none of them credited by his judges: however, as there was no direct proof of his having perpetrated the crime, he was not convicted capitally, but was condemned to a puniſhment in moſt people's eyes more ſevere, hard labour for life.

"The perſon who had been robbed and murdered was a man much eſteemed on account of his character and manners; by his untimely death, a reſpectable family were in danger of being reduced from affluence to poverty: this created a general ſympathy. The murder was ſuppoſed to have

have been accompanied with circumſtances peculiarly cruel; the laſt excited as much indignation as the former did compaſſion.

"The more atrocious a crime is, there certainly is the leſs probability that the individual who happens to be taken up on ſuſpicion of having perpetrated it, is really guilty; for this plain reaſon, that a much greater proportion of mankind are capable of committing a little crime than a very great one; but it happens frequently, that the juſt indignation againſt the crime is raſhly and unjuſtly applied againſt whoever is firſt accuſed; and the very circumſtance of uncommon atrocity, which ought to render us difficult in the admiſſion of the charge, is ſometimes the cauſe of a precipitate and unjuſt condemnation. This ſeems to have been the caſe in the inſtance of poor Antonio.

"He has ſince told me, that he wrote to me immediately after receiving his hard ſentence; but whether from the letter's having been neglected by the perſon to whom

whom he gave it to be put into the poſt-office, or from whatever other cauſe, it never came to my hand; but after he had been ſeveral months in this ſituation, I received a letter which gave me the firſt intelligence of his misfortune; it was written in all the ſimplicity of truth: to convey an idea of the horrors of his fate required not the aid of eloquence. "I am condemned," ſaid he, "to ſlavery for my whole life, on account of a murder committed at Naples when I was in your ſervice at Geneva."

"The blockhead deſerved to ſuffer," ſaid Zeluco, "for his folly in leaving your ſervice, where he was happier than he deſerved."

"The poor fellow," replied Bertram, "made that very obſervation in his letter; but ſurely, Sir, his ſufferings were too ſevere for a piece of levity, or that love of variety ſo natural to us all. I was ſo ſhocked with the idea of an innocent man's being unjuſtly condemned, that my firſt impulſe was to ſet out immediately for Naples; but

on

on my mentioning this to ſome of my friends, they aſſured me, that an atteſtation of the man's having been in my ſervice at the time of the murder, and for a conſiderable ſpace before and after, would be ſufficient to procure his liberty. This was immediately drawn up in due form, and ſent to Naples, incloſed in a letter to an eminent lawyer of that city.

"But Antonio's diſmal ſituation haunted me day and night. I could not walk into the fields without thinking on his being chained to endleſs labour—nor eat a meal without reflecting on the ſcanty morſel moiſtened with tears on which the wretched Antonio fed—nor lie down in my bed without dreaming I beheld the unhappy man ſtretched on the damp pavement of a dungeon. "Alas," cried I, "is it acting up to the Divine precept, *do as you would be done by*, to truſt the liberty and life of an innocent man to a letter, which may have miſcarried or prove ineffectual? If I go myſelf, it will be in my power to identify the man, and by a thouſand circumſtances make

make his innocence ſo evident, that I muſt infallibly procure his immediate liberty." Theſe and ſimilar reflexions engroſſed my mind entirely. I was by no means ſatisfied with my own conduct, and you know, Sir," continued Bertram, " that when a man ſtands condemned at the bar of his own conſcience, it is of ſmall importance to his happineſs to be thought innocent by all the reſt of the world; for my own part I felt myſelf ſo unhappy on this occaſion, that in compaſſion to myſelf, as well as to Antonio, I ſet out for this city, before I could receive any anſwer to my letter.

" Moſt fortunate it was for Antonio and for me that I did ſo. The lawyer to whom my letter was addreſſed was gone to Meſſina, and my letter diſregarded. I found poor Antonio at hard labour at Caſſerta, among a number of wretches againſt whom crimes had been *proved* ſimilar to that of which he was *preſumed* guilty.

" To paint the poor fellow's joy and gratitude at ſight of me," continued Bertram, " is not in my power; but I did not find

it

it ſo eaſy a matter to procure his liberty as I expected: I had more difficulty in prevailing on ſome to whom I addreſſed myſelf, only to hear my ſtory, than I thought I ſhould have had in obtaining the whole of my object; and when they had heard it, they ſeemed to think it of leſs importance than I ever before believed one human creature's happineſs could poſſibly be to another.

"None of them expreſſed any doubt of the man's innocence, yet few would give themſelves the leaſt trouble to get him relieved: they ſhrugged up their ſhoulders, ſaid it was hard on the man, but no buſineſs of theirs. I am convinced, Sir, that it would ſhock you, were I to deſcribe every circumſtance of the ſavage hardneſs of heart and ſelfiſh indifference which were diſcovered by ſome. Well, I wiſh thoſe gentlemen much good of their inſenſibility. I dare ſay it may have ſaved them ſome unpleaſant moments, which I, and I doubt not you, Sir, have felt! But of this I am convinced,

that

that when I ſucceeded at length in procuring Antonio's liberty, my ſatisfaction was little inferior to his; and I have no doubt but it will afford me pleaſure to my laſt hour: and ſo, Sir, I leave you to judge whether or not I have reaſon to rejoice in having made this jaunt to Naples."

Zeluco's eyes were fixed on the ground during the latter part of Bertram's narrative; and he continued ſilent and penſive for ſome time after it was finiſhed. His reflexions ſeemed not of a pleaſing nature, ſeveral ſighs eſcaped from him; if he then threw back a glance on his own paſt life, he would diſcover no cheering ray reflected from acts of benevolence to brighten the gloomy retroſpect, no cordial drop of ſelf-approbation to comfort his drooping ſpirits.

"I fear my long ſtory has tired you, Sir," ſaid Bertram; "here is to your good health," added he, filling his glaſs.

"I pledge you with all my heart," ſaid Zeluco, endeavouring to ſhake off reflexion,

in which however he did not ſucceed, till he had almoſt entirely drowned thought in repeated bumpers.

In the courſe of their converſation, Zeluco renewed the offer he had made in the morning, of furniſhing Bertram with what money he had occaſion for, till the letter of credit which he expected ſhould arrive; but Bertram aſſured him that he was already accommodated. The fact was, that Buchanan having accidentally heard that a ſervant had been redeemed from ſlavery by his maſter, had gone and converſed with the man himſelf, from whom he heard all the particulars, of which he was ſo full, that on returning home he entered into the room where Mr. N—— was alone, ſaying, "O Sir, I have ſomething to tell you, which I am ſure will do your heart good to hear!"—He then gave him the whole ſtory as he had received it from the Savoyard, concluding with this reflexion: "I really do imagine, Sir, that there is ſomething in the air of mountainous countries exceedingly favourable to kindneſs of heart.—I have

have heard ſeveral travellers declare that they had met with more hoſpitality in a ſhort tour in the Highlands of Scotland, than in their journies over all Flanders and the Low Countries, although the laſt are as full of populous towns as the former is of mountains."

"This Bertram is a citizen of Geneva, whoſe territories are not mountainous," ſaid Mr. N——, ſmiling.

"Your honour will be pleaſed to remember," replied Buchanan, "that Geneva is ſituated by a fine lake, juſt as the village of Buchanan is by Loch Lomond; and there are mountains at no great diſtance from both."

"I had forgot that," ſaid Mr. N——; "but I am ſo charmed with the behaviour of this man, that I ſhould like to be acquainted with him, although it could be proved againſt him that he had been born above a hundred miles from any lake or mountain."

Mr. N—— went the very next morning to call on Bertram, and found him as

he returned from his firſt interview with Zeluco, telling him he had done himſelf the honour of waiting on him expreſsly to ſolicit the acquaintance of a man of ſo much worth. In the courſe of their converſation, Mr. N—— diſcovered that he had been well acquainted with Bertram's father when he himſelf had been at Geneva, and when Bertram was in the Spaniſh ſervice. Mr. N—— at the ſame time told Bertram, that he had received many civilities from his relations, and ſpoke of his father in ſuch terms of regard as brought the tears into the ſon's eyes; who although he at firſt had declined Mr. N——'s offer, now told him he would with pleaſure make uſe of his banker for what money he might need, till his own credit ſhould arrive.

Zeluco ſeemed diſappointed on finding that he was anticipated in fixing an obligation on Bertram. He aſked, Whether he had mentioned to Mr. N—— any thing of their preſent meeting?

"I fancy, Sir," ſaid Bertram, a little gravely, "you have forgot that I promiſed

not to mention my being acquainted with you to any body."

Zeluco begged his excuſe, ſaying, he *had* forgot; adding, that it would be no longer neceſſary to conceal their acquaintance, and invited him to dine with him the following day.

Bertram expreſſed no deſire of knowing Zeluco's reaſon for his former wiſh of concealment, or for the ſecret manner in which they had met. He perceived that Zeluco began to be affected by the wine, and imputed his loſs of memory, and his neglecting to explain this, to that circumſtance.

CHAP. LXXXVIII.

Lentus in meditando ubi prorupuiſſet, triſtibus dictis atrocia facta conjungebat. TACIT.

THE ſuſpicions which rankled in the breaſt of Zeluco would perhaps have gradually loſt their force, and at length died away, had they not been carefully cheriſhed and kept alive by the watchful malice of Nerina. She adapted and linked together every accidental circumſtance in ſuch an artful manner, that, to the diſturbed fancy of Zeluco, they formed a chain of irrefragable force; the abſurd anſwers of the nurſe to his queſtions, and the paſſionate interference of Laura's maid, which of themſelves had made a ſtrong impreſſion on his mind, received additional ſtrength from the comments of Nerina.

As the tranſactions of his paſt life often preſented themſelves to Zeluco's mind in painful review; it is probable, that the ſuſpicions

which, with a vindictive ſpirit, he had formerly raiſed in the breaſt of the Portugueſe, now afforded him no very agreeable reflection; and the anguiſh which Zeluco himſelf felt, from the idea of his not being the father of Laura's child, ſeems a juſt retribution for the thorns which, on a ſimilar occaſion, he had planted in the breaſt of another.

Laura obſerved an increaſing gloom on the countenance of her huſband, and was ſhocked and terrified at the looks he ſometimes threw on his child. She mentioned this to Signora Sporza, who, not having obſerved it herſelf, perſuaded Laura, that what alarmed her proceeded entirely from her viewing the looks and actions of Zeluco through a medium of additional gloom ever ſince the information given by the valet.

A packet of letters arrived from Captain Seidlits, in which was one addreſſed to Mr. N——, one to Signora Sporza, and one to Madame de Seidlits, but none to Laura. This omiſſion was a circumſtance of new

ſuſpicion

ſuſpicion in the eyes of Zeluco, who was with Madame de Seidlits when ſhe opened the cover of the letters. He ſuſpected what was really the caſe, that there was a letter for Laura incloſed in that for Signora Sporza; and had he been without a witneſs, it is not impoſſible but he might have had the meanneſs to have broken open the letter. Madame de Seidlits ſent it by her own ſervant to Signora Sporza, and Zeluco remained on the watch to obſerve whether Signora Sporza did not ſend or bring a letter to Laura. She thought proper to bring it herſelf, and Zeluco met her as ſhe was going to Laura's apartment. He accoſted her with aſſumed cheerfulneſs, ſaid he was going to drive out for a few miles, and being perſuaded ſhe would not accept, he invited her to accompany him in the carriage; which ſhe having declined, he bade her adieu, ſaying, he would return within a few hours; and immediately went out of the houſe, but returned through the garden to his own apartment, by a door of which he alone had the key, and from

thence paſſed unobſerved into a ſmall room adjoining that in which Laura and Signora Sporza were converſing. His deſign was to diſcover whether his ſuſpicions regarding the letter were well founded, and to hear what paſſed between the two friends, when they thought themſelves unobſerved, and him at a diſtance.

Zeluco could not diſtinctly hear every word that paſſed; but from what he did hear, he underſtood that a letter had come from Captain Seidlits to Laura;—that the Captain with his friend Carloſtein would arrive very ſoon;—that Laura earneſtly wiſhed to be ſeparated from him as ſoon as poſſible, provided ſhe ſhould be permitted to take her child with her;—and at laſt he heard Laura with a raiſed voice diſtinctly pronounce theſe words: "O my deareſt brother, had you arrived a few weeks ſooner at Naples, I ſhould never have been united to this mean perfidious man!"

Zeluco was ſo tranſported with rage on hearing this, that he mechanically drew his

ſtiletto, and was on the point of burſting into the room, and ſtabbing his wife, when hearing the voice of Signora Sporza, he was again tempted to liſten.

Signora Sporza endeavoured to ſooth and quiet the mind of Laura by admonitions to patience and fortitude, repreſenting that ſhe would in a very ſhort time have the pleaſure of embracing her brother, who would unqueſtionably fall on means to free her for ever from her odious tyrant: reminding her at the ſame time, that it was of the utmoſt importance to manage the temper of the monſter, till ſuch time as he ſhould agree to deliver the child to her care.

She then told Laura, that ſhe was obliged to make a few morning viſits, but would ſee her in the evening; and took her leave. Zeluco remained for ſome time boiling with indignation in his liſtening-place, which he left at laſt, and came round to the room in which Laura was. She had juſt received her child from the nurſe when Zeluco entered.—He made a motion with

his hand for the nurſe to retire, which ſhe directly did, leaving the child in Laura's arms.

Zeluco walked backward and forward for ſome time with a moroſe and gloomy countenance, without ſpeaking or ſeeming to take notice of either.

As this was nothing unuſual, Laura paid no attention to it, nor did ſhe remark the dreadful humour he was in, till turning quick upon her, he ſaid, with a fierce look, "Don't you think that child very like his father, Madam?"

"He is much too young," replied ſhe, "for his features to announce any particular likeneſs."

"I have been told," ſaid he, "that he already diſplays a moſt ſtriking reſemblance to your brother."

"I am happy to hear it," ſaid Laura, careſſing the child.

"Have you the audacity to ſay ſo, Madam, and to my face?" exclaimed Zeluco, furiouſly.

"What

"What is it that you mean, Sir?" cried Laura, riſing from her ſeat; for the child ſcreamed, being alarmed at Zeluco's loud and threatening voice.

"Peace—inceſtuous baſtard!" exclaimed he, graſping the infant by the throat with frantic violence.

"Ah, monſter! you murder your child!" cried Laura, agonized with terror, and endeavouring to remove his diſtracted hand.

It was removed too late;—the child never breathed more.

The wretched mother ſunk again upon her ſeat; her ſoul ſuſpended between hope and deſpair, while her imploring eyes were rivetted on the face of the infant, which lay breathleſs on her knee.

The women hearing a confuſed noiſe, ruſhed into the room:—every means were uſed for the recovery of the child;—all were fruitleſs.

When it became certain that there was no hope, Laura, yielding to deſpair, claſped the dead infant to her boſom, crying, "Oh my

my child! my child! take thy miſerable mother with thee to the grave!" and ſhe directly fell ſenſeleſs on the floor.

The child's body being removed, Laura was carried to her bed in a ſtate of inſenſibility.

CHAP. LXXXIX.

Notre repentir n'eſt pas tant un regret du mal que nous avons fait, qu'une crainte de celui qui nous en peut arriver. ROCHEFOUCAULT.

WHEN it appeared that the child was irrecoverably gone, Zeluco's jealous phrenzy dwindled into perſonal fear, leſt he ſhould be called to account for the murder of the child. To the attendants, therefore, he made a great diſplay of concern for the child's death, and ſtill more for the conſequences it might have on the health of his beloved wife. And when Signora Sporza returned, he took care to meet her, and informed her, before the nurſe and other domeſtics, with an air of infinite ſorrow, That the dear infant had been ſeized on a ſudden in a moſt unexpected manner with convulſions while he was in his mother's arms; and that, in ſpite of all the means which could be uſed to ſave his life, the poor

poor child had expired; on which Laura had immediately fainted, and nothing but his concern for her had prevented him from being in the ſame ſtate; that ſhe ſtill continued very much diſturbed, for which reaſon it was highly proper to keep her quiet and ſecluded from all company; for the ſight of any body, or aſking her queſtions in her preſent ſituation, might have very bad conſequences.

Signora Sporza did not liſten to this repreſentation without ſhewing ſymptoms of impatience; and when he finiſhed, ſhe made no anſwer, but that ſhe muſt immediately ſee her friend.

"You cannot think of it at preſent, my dear Madam," ſaid Zeluco.

"I muſt ſee my friend immediately," ſaid ſhe, moving towards the apartment in which Laura was.

"Good Heavens!" cried he, ſtepping between her and the door, "you would not intrude upon her ſorrow at ſuch a moment?"

"She

"She never thought my viſits intruſion," replied Signora Sporza; "I muſt ſee her, Sir.—Allow me to paſs."

Zeluco was apprehenſive that Laura would immediately accuſe him of the child's death, or allow ſome expreſſion to fall from her that would unfold the manner of it; he was very deſirous therefore that no perſon ſhould be admitted to her till he himſelf had tried to perſuade her that the infant's death was accidental; or, if he failed in that, he hoped he ſhould, by expreſſing great grief and contrition for the involuntary movement his hand had made, be able to prevail on Laura to promiſe never to mention what ſhe had ſeen. Had he once obtained ſuch a promiſe, he knew that he ſhould be ſafe, being well acquainted with her inviolable attachment to her word. He ſtrove therefore by every argument he could deviſe to prevail on Signora Sporza to poſtpone her viſit; but all his arguments were loſt on her. Signora Sporza's impatience to ſee her friend augmented in proportion to the earneſtneſs he

ſhewed

ſhewed to prevent it; ſhe became louder and more violent in her manner, and Zeluco was obliged to yield to the point, informing her at the ſame time, that he was much afraid that Laura's ſenſes were diſturbed by the ſhock of ſuch an unexpected accident.

Zeluco did not know when he made this aſſertion that it was true; he even dreaded that it was not; but he threw it out, that leſs ſtreſs might be laid on any expreſſion which, in the agony of grief, might fall from Laura. The diſturbance of Laura's ſenſes, which he aſſerted at random, had in reality taken place.

Sometime after her being carried to bed, as was mentioned, ſhe ſhewed ſigns of life, but of no diſtinct recollection; after remaining a few minutes in this ſtate, ſhe relapſed into a complete ſtupor, from which, after ſome interval, ſhe recovered as before, having only a confuſed impreſſion that ſomething dreadful had happened, but without being able to recover her ſcattered ſenſes ſo far as to remember what it was.

When

When Signora Sporza came to the door of Laura's bed-chamber, ſhe heard her, in a wild and plaintive tone, ſaying, "Alas! where have I been? What has happened? Can no body tell? Do all your brains turn round, do your hearts fail, like mine?" She then fell back into her former ſtupor.

While ſhe lay in this ſtate, the attendants informed Signora Sporza, that their miſtreſs repeated nearly the ſame expreſſions as often as ſhe recovered from thoſe fits of fainting.

Signora Sporza ſeated herſelf at Laura's bed-ſide, with her eyes fixed on her face, and watching all her movements. As ſoon as ſhe perceived her recovering, ſhe took hold of her hand, and addreſſing her in the moſt ſoothing and affectionate tone of voice, "How do you do, my lovely friend?" ſaid ſhe.

Laura ſtared her wildly in the face for ſome time without ſpeaking, and then cried, "O! is it you? Are you come at laſt!"—"Yes, my dear, I am come?" replied Signora Sporza. "But do you know,"

ſaid

ſaid Laura, "what has happened?"—"I am very ſorry," replied Signora Sporza, "for what has happened."—"Pray, tell me," cried Laura, "what it is? None of them will tell me; but I am ſure it is ſomething very ſad; for ſee they all look ſad and mournful, and you are ſorrowful too, and my poor heart is ſad, although I know not wherefore—but my head turns ſo!——"

Madame de Seidlits, by the indiſcretion of a ſervant, had been told of the infant's death, with the additional circumſtance that Laura herſelf was dying.

Half frantic at the intelligence, ſhe hurried from her own houſe to that of Zeluco, and without liſtening to the accounts he endeavoured to give her, or regarding the oppoſition that was made to her appearance ſuddenly before her daughter, ſhe ruſhed into her bed-chamber, exclaiming, "My child! my child! where is my child?"

At this expreſſion Laura ſtarted, ſat up in the bed, and ſeemed in ſome degree to

recover her recollection; with one hand oppoſing her mother's embrace, while with a ſolemn tone of voice, and ſternneſs of regard moſt unlike her natural ſweetneſs, ſhe pronounced, "*My* child is gone for ever!—the fiend graſped him;" after which ſhe ſcreamed and fell back again inſenſible on the pillow. When ſhe recovered, ſhe uttered many expreſſions ſeemingly incoherent, but which bore ſome relation to the act which had produced her diſorder. Had any perſon been witneſs to the child's murder, he would eaſily have perceived that Laura's moſt incoherent expreſſion glanced at that deed; but as nobody had, all imagined they were quite unmeaning, and proceeding from the diſorder which the child's unexpected death had produced.

Madame de Seidlits, having recovered in ſome degree the firſt ſhock ſhe felt on perceiving the melancholy ſtate in which her daughter was, ſummoned all her fortitude that ſhe might be enabled to aſſiſt Signora Sporza in ſoothing, ſupporting, and comforting Laura.

A Phyſician having arrived, was, according to the orders given by Zeluco, introduced to his apartment before he was permitted to ſee Laura. Zeluco, with oſtentatious ſorrow, told him of the child's being ſuddenly carried off by a convulſion fit; that there was reaſon to apprehend this ſad event had diſturbed the ſenſes of his wife, as ſhe had been talking extravagantly ever ſince, did not know her intimate acquaintance, and was terrified at the ſight of her beſt friends. Having thus prepared the Phyſician, he allowed him to viſit Laura.

She was juſt recovered from a fit of ſtupor when he was introduced. On his addreſſing her, ſhe raiſed her head from the pillow, and looked very earneſtly at him, but made no anſwer to his queſtions; on his propoſing to retire, ſhe ſaid with a timid voice, "I beg, my good Sir, that you will not permit the wicked fiend to come near me."

The Phyſician, being now confirmed in the belief of what Zeluco had told him, ordered her to be blooded, to be kept very quiet,

quiet, and not to be disturbed with questions, or in any way encouraged to speak, for it was too evident that her mind was disturbed; at the same time he gave Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza great reason to hope, that with care she would be in a short time restored to her perfect health.

Although Zeluco had reason to be pleased with the first part of the physician's declaration, he was alarmed at the last. While Laura remained in her present state, little stress could be laid on what she said; but should she recover, whatever account she gave, he well knew, would carry complete conviction to the minds of all who knew her. He could not indeed accuse himself of a predetermined intention of murdering the child; but he had great reason for remorse and self-condemnation, when he reflected that the child's death was occasioned by the propensity he betrayed in his infancy, and had indulged ever since, of giving way to every impulse of passion. In this hour of reflexion,

among the many ſtinging recollections which intruded themſelves on his memory, he could not exclude the remonſtrance of his tutor, when he himſelf, yet a child, had, in a fit of groundleſs paſſion, ſqueezed his ſparrow to death; that remonſtrance now appeared to his alarmed conſcience in the light of a prophecy: "Had I paid more regard," ſaid he to himſelf, "to what that worthy man then, and on other occaſions, told me, I ſhould not now have reaſon to dread the conſequences of this curſed accident."

Yet, whatever remorſe Zeluco felt for various and accumulated inſtances of wickedneſs, of which his conſcience accuſed him, what chiefly kept his mind on the rack at preſent was, a fear that thoſe alluſive expreſſions, which conſtantly dropt from Laura, might lead to a ſuſpicion of the fact which he wiſhed ſo much to conceal; for however myſterious or incoherent they might appear to others, they were ſo clear and connected to him, that he received a freſh alarm as often as any of them were repeated;

repeated; and whatever he hoped, he was by no means certain, that when Laura recovered, ſhe would not relate the fact as it really happened, and accuſe him publicly; for theſe reaſons he fervently wiſhed that ſhe might die of her preſent illneſs, or remain diſtracted.

The continual anxiety he had for his own ſafety ſuſpended the ripening of a certain plan which before occupied his thoughts for the deſtruction of Seidlits, who was now daily expected. His whole attention was directed towards Laura; for, although he never ventured to appear in her ſight, yet he took care to have every word reported to him that fell from her lips; and he was kept in continual alarm at the import of her expreſſions.

CHAP. XC.

Him ſhall the fury paſſions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Diſdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that ſculks behind;
* * * *
Or Jealouſy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the heart;
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-viſag'd comfortleſs Deſpair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart. GRAY.

ABOUT this time Carloſtein and Seidlits returned from their excurſion; they went directly to the houſe of Madame de Seidlits, and had the firſt account of the child's death and Laura's indiſpoſition from her maid; Madame de Seidlits herſelf being then in bed, indiſpoſed with the watching and fatigue which ſhe had undergone. The two friends were equally ſhocked at this affecting narrative; they ſpoke of calling

ing at Signora Sporza's, but were informed that ſhe ſlept conſtantly at the houſe of Zeluco, and was hardly ever a moment from Laura's bed-ſide. Captain Seidlits then propoſed to go directly there, whither Carloſtein thought he could not with propriety accompany him; but, overwhelmed with the deepeſt ſorrow, went to his lodging, there to wait for the return of his friend.

Zeluco received Seidlits with all the appearance of affliction. "Alas! my friend," cried he, "we have loſt your dear little nephew; he was cut off by convulſions in the arms of his mother. I am told by phyſicians, that ſuch accidents are not uncommon among infants. I leave you to judge of his poor mother's ſituation; ſhe has been in a moſt diſordered ſtate of mind ever ſince; and ſhe ſeems to be always worſe after ſeeing any of her old acquaintance."

To all this Seidlits made little or no anſwer; but a woman who had the particular care of Laura coming out of her bed-chamber, and reporting that ſhe was more

compoſed than uſual, he deſired to be admitted to ſee her.

"I fear it will increaſe her uneaſineſs," ſaid Zeluco.

"I am convinced it will give her pleaſure," ſaid Seidlits; "for ſhe had always pleaſure in ſeeing me."

"Really!" ſaid Zeluco, looking fiercely at Seidlits; for a movement of jealouſy threw him off his guard.

"I have every reaſon to think ſo," reſumed Seidlits naturally, and without obſerving how Zeluco was affected.

"The Doctor muſt determine," ſaid Laura's nurſe, pointing to the Phyſician who entered the room.

The caſe being ſtated to him, "Let her brother's name be mentioned to her," ſaid he, "before he appears, and we will obſerve how ſhe is affected."

Zeluco did not object to the experiment; he thought ſomething might fall from Laura, on mentioning or ſeeing Seidlits, which would betray the intimacy that, as he ſuſpected, had been between them.

The

The Phyſician conducted Seidlits to Laura's bed-chamber. Zeluco ſtood at the door, which he kept a-jar for the purpoſe of liſtening.

Laura ſat up in the bed, propped with pillows; Signora Sporza near her. The Phyſician whiſpered to Signora Sporza, that Captain Seidlits was arrived, and in the houſe; and he then ſaid aloud to her, "Your friend Captain Seidlits is ſafely arrived at Naples."

"I am moſt happy to hear it," ſaid ſhe, looking at Laura, who took no notice.

"Did you not hear, my dear," ſaid Signora Sporza, addreſſing Laura,—"Did you not hear what the Doctor ſaid?"

"No;" replied Laura.

"He ſaid your brother Captain Seidlits is returned."

"Yes—" ſaid Laura, without any emotion.

"O merciful Virgin!" cried Signora Sporza, burſting into tears, "her ſweet ſenſes are gone;—ſhe knows not what I ſay."

What

What Laura heard, it appeared, made much leſs impreſſion on her mind than what ſhe ſaw; for ſhe no ſooner beheld Signora Sporza in tears, than ſhe took hold of her hand, and with a look and tone of contrition, ſaid, "Woe is me! I fear I have offended you; truly, I meant it not."

"I know you did not, my angel," ſaid Signora Sporza; "but ſurely you remember Captain Seidlits."

"Seidlits!" ſaid Laura.

"Yes, my ſweet friend, your brother," rejoined Signora Sporza.

"My brother!" repeated Laura, with a vacant ſtare.—"Where is my brother?"

"Here is your brother," ſaid Captain Seidlits, who, concealed by a ſkreen, had with impatience heard the converſation, and being no longer able to reſtrain his emotion, broke forth in this imprudent manner.

Laura ſcreamed, and hid her face under the bed-clothes at his ſudden appearance; "My beloved ſiſter," ſaid Seidlits, "do you not know me?" Signora Sporza and the

the Phyſician continuing to aſſure her that it was her brother, ſhe raiſed her head, and looked with caution and an appearance of terror at Seidlits; ſhe threw her eyes alſo around the room, as if ſhe ſuſpected that ſome other perſon was in it.

"There is nobody preſent but your friends, my love," ſaid Signora Sporza.

"I was afraid the wicked fiend had returned," ſaid Laura.

"There is no wicked fiend here, my love," ſaid Signora Sporza. "This is your brother; you know him, do you not?"

"Surely you do, my dear," ſaid Seidlits with a broken voice.

Laura then looked more attentively at him; then throwing her eyes on Signora Sporza, ſhe pointed, with a ſmile, to Seidlits.

"Yes, my angel," ſaid Signora Sporza, "that is your brother."

Laura made no anſwer, but continued to look with complacency on Seidlits.

The name of Brother affected her not; but ſeeing him ſeemed to give her an agreeable

able impreſſion, without her being able to recollect his connexion with herſelf; yet when addreſſing her in the moſt affectionate terms he held forth his hand to her, ſhe gave him hers, and diſplayed, not only evident marks of ſatisfaction while he remained, but alſo of uneaſineſs when he propoſed to withdraw *.

Signora Sporza attended the Captain out of the room, and Zeluco conducted both into an adjoining apartment.

* The Author has been informed that this diſtinction between the effect of audible and of viſible objects, has been criticiſed as unnatural. He is convinced, however, that he has obſerved it in people in the ſtate of mind in which Laura is here repreſented, and in tracing it, he endeavoured to copy faithfully from nature. Not to recur to the trite, though true, remark of,

Segnius irritant animos demiſſa per aurem
Quam quæ ſunt oculis ſubjecta fidelibus;

I conceive that the eye may continue to do its office of conveying intelligence to the mind, long after the latter has ceaſed to derive any information from words. The communication in the firſt caſe is natural and immediate. The ſecond requires the intervention of a medium.

" How

"How ſtrange," ſaid Zeluco, "that ſhe was no way affected when told that you were come?"

Seidlits made no anſwer, but wiped his eyes.

"Yet ſhe ſeemed pleaſed at ſeeing you," continued Zeluco.

Seidlits was abſorbed in thought, and could not ſpeak for ſome time; he at length ſaid, addreſſing himſelf to Signora Sporza, "She ſeemed in terror at firſt;—ſhe certainly took me for ſome other perſon.—What did ſhe mean by the wicked fiend?"

Zeluco anticipated the anſwer, ſaying, "There is no knowing what ſhe means,—her expreſſions are ſo extravagant,—ſhe probably has no meaning;—the ſevere ſhock ſhe received by the ſudden death of the dear child, has entirely deranged her memory and judgment; only conceive a woman of her great ſenſibility to ſee her child expire in her arms without any viſible cauſe! for although the Phyſician declares

he

he has known many inſtances of infants carried off in the ſame ſudden manner, yet her delicate conſtitution could not ſtand it;—but, thank Heaven! ſhe is better than ſhe was; and the Phyſician ſtill hopes ſhe will recover entirely."

During this recital, Signora Sporza preſerved a gloomy ſilence, but at one time ſhook her head in a manner which ſtruck terror into the heart of Zeluco, and raiſed ſuſpicions in the mind of Seidlits.

When he went to his lodgings he found Mr. N—— with Carloſtein. It was not without difficulty and many interruptions that he gave them an account of Laura's ſituation. They were all ſo much affected that little converſation paſſed between them, and Seidlits retired without communicating even to Carloſtein the doubts which he had on his mind.

When he called next morning to know how his ſiſter was, he found an opportunity of ſpeaking with Signora Sporza by herſelf. "My dear Madam," ſaid he,

"I beg you will let me know your real ſentiments of this melancholy affair. I fear you conceal ſomething."

"I know nothing," replied ſhe, "which I will not communicate to you.—I do not know what to think.—I left your ſiſter and the child well; in a few hours I returned, and the child was dead, and your lovely ſiſter thus; I then got the ſame account which you have heard.—We muſt take patience.—The Phyſician is an honeſt man, and your ſiſter grows a little better. I never quit her;—we muſt have patience." Zeluco entering the room, prevented any farther converſation.

Laura ſeemed gradually and uniformly to grow better from the time that Seidlits arrived; but ſhe recovered her bodily ſtrength and looks in a greater proportion than ſhe did her memory and judgment.

Carloſtein meanwhile remained in the moſt agonizing ſtate of ſuſpenſe; his ſpirits roſe or fell according to the accounts he received of her ſtate of health from the Phyſician,

ſician, from Signora Sporza, and from his friend Seidlits: he was continually going from the one to the other; and when they were all engaged at the ſame time with Laura, he walked in ſight of the houſe watching till one of them came out, that he might receive freſh intelligence on the only ſubject on which he could think or converſe.

CHAP. XCI.

O, it is monſtrous!
Methought the billows ſpoke, and told me of it;
The winds did ſing it to me. SHAKESPEARE.

THE death of the child, the diſorder of Laura, with the fears which oppreſſed the mind of Zeluco, leſt the immediate cauſe of both ſhould be ſuſpected from the myſterious expreſſions of Laura, had ſo much engroſſed his time, that it was not in his power to beſtow much of his company on Nerina; he well knew that all the diſplay of ſorrow he made would be conſidered as mere grimace, and would even ſtrengthen the ſuſpicions which his perſonal ſafety rendered it ſo neceſſary for him to extinguiſh, if he were known to viſit her at the very time he was affecting ſo much grief on account of the child's death and his wife's diſorder. He there-

fore viſited Nerina very ſeldom, and with the utmoſt ſecrecy.

This conduct, though prudent and expedient in Zeluco's ſituation, was highly offenſive to Nerina, and all the apologies and explanations he was able to make could not perſuade her to view it in any other light.

It is true, ſhe was not acquainted with the chief reaſon he had for obſerving this line of conduct; for although he had informed Nerina of the child's ſudden death, and the effect it had produced on Laura, he was of too reſerved and cautious a temper to entruſt her with the original cauſe of both, which conſtantly preyed upon his mind, and filled him with increaſing inquietude.

In one of his ſecret viſits to her, ſhe imputed the dejection of ſpirits which aroſe from thoſe painful reflections, to grief for the death of his child; and conſidering this as an inſult to her, ſhe could not refrain from diſplaying her ill-humour.

" I cannot

"I cannot help thinking you one of the moſt fortunate men living," ſaid ſhe to him.

"In what?" ſaid he, a little ſurpriſed at the obſervation.

"Why, in getting ſo cleverly rid of a baſtard," replied ſhe, "who would have cut off great part of your fortune from your own children, if ever you have any."

To this Zeluco making no reply, ſhe proceeded: "But although you have been ſo providentially freed from one, it would be wiſe in you to be a little more watchful in future; you may not get ſo quickly rid of the next."

At this obſervation he fell into a fit of ſwearing.

"I am not ſurpriſed at your ill-humour," continued ſhe; "it is to be ſure a little provoking to have a wife who pretends to have loſt her ſenſes, and a brother-in-law ſo diſagreeable to you, and ſo very agreeable to her, conſtantly at her bed-ſide."

"Pretends!" cried Zeluco; "Can you conceive it is pretence?"

"Nay," replied Nerina, "you ought to be the beſt judge of your wife's ſenſibility; but one cannot help thinking it a little extraordinary that ſhe ſhould be ſo much affected with a loſs which ſhe can ſo readily ſupply."

Zeluco poured freſh execrations on Laura and her brother, wiſhing he knew how to get quit of both.

"Contrive only to free yourſelf from *her*," ſaid Nerina, "and you will be no longer troubled with *him*."

"I ſhall never be freed from her," ſaid he peeviſhly; "ſhe grows better inſtead of worſe."

"Do not deſpair," cried Nerina, "ſhe may depart when it is leaſt expected."

"No.—She grows better, I tell you," ſaid Zeluco; "there is no chance of her departure now."

"There is one chance, however," ſaid Nerina.

"What is that?" ſaid Zeluco eagerly.

"She may be ſnapt off in ſuch a fit as the child was," ſaid Nerina.

At

At this random expreſſion, the alarmed heart of Zeluco ſhrunk; he became pale as aſhes, and ſtaring wildly, in a voice half ſuppreſſed, he uttered, "What do you mean?"

"Mean!" ſaid ſhe, ſurpriſed at his emotion; "What do *you* mean?—What in the name of wonder diſturbs you?—Gracious heaven, how pale you are!—I do not know what I ſaid.—What can be the matter with you?"

"I grew ſick all of a ſudden," ſaid he, recovering his preſence of mind, "but it is paſſing away already."

"I hope it was nothing which I ſaid that affected you ſo."

"No; not in the leaſt," replied Zeluco, forcing a ſmile; "I did not obſerve what you ſaid: I was thinking of ſomething elſe;—but I have been ſubject of late to ſickiſh qualms which invade me ſuddenly, and make me look very pale."

"You never mentioned this to me before," ſaid Nerina.

"No assuredly," said Zeluco; "I hate to mention it to any body, or even to think of it.—Let us talk of something else."

The usual consequence of vice was strongly felt by this unhappy man; though naturally bold and daring, the conscious guilt which hung upon his mind unmanned him to such a degree, that he was appalled at every accidental expression; and the constant uneasiness which this occasioned suggested fresh crimes to free him from the effects of the former.

In spite of all his endeavours against them, he often fell into fits of musing while he remained with Nerina; when she accused him of this, and inquired into the cause of his dejection, he imputed it to a return of sickness; and on her stating this as a mere pretext to conceal the true cause, "Why then," said he, by way of pleasing her, and to prevent her farther inquiries, "if you will have the truth, I am embarrassed with a wife, which puts it out

of my power to devote my whole time and attention to her on whom my heart is fixed."

"In her preſent ſituation," ſaid Nerina, "if your wife really is in the ſtate you ſeem to think, it were better for the woman herſelf that ſhe were dead."

"That may be," ſaid Zeluco; "but ſhe will not die a minute the ſooner for that."

"What is the Phyſician's opinion?" reſumed Nerina.

"It is impoſſible to know," replied Zeluco; "thoſe fellows never give their real opinion."

"I have no notion of employing a Phyſician who will not give what opinion, and alſo what medicines, are moſt expedient," ſaid Nerina.

To this ſtrange ſpeech Zeluco made no anſwer.

"What medicines *does* he give her?" reſumed ſhe.

"Upon my ſoul I never aſked," ſaid Zeluco.

"Becauſe," reſumed Nerina, "I believe they give laudanum in ſuch caſes: I happened to know this by a ſingular accident enough; an acquaintance of mine was affected in the ſame way; ſhe was ordered by a phyſician a certain number of drops every night; her maid, by miſtake, gave a whole phial full, and ſhe died next morning in the pleaſanteſt way imaginable; her relations made a rout about it at firſt, but on calm reflection they were ſatisfied, that in the patient's ſituation it was the luckieſt accident that could have befallen her."

Zeluco, without ſeeming to underſtand the import of this ſtory, replied coldly, "I ſhall leave the phyſician to treat his patient as he pleaſes."

The conſtant terror under which Zeluco was, leſt Laura, whether intentionally or not, ſhould ſay any thing which might create ſuſpicion againſt himſelf, was ſufficient, independent of his abſurd jealouſy, to have converted his indifference for her into a rancorous hatred. He now wiſhed

for

for nothing more eagerly than her death, and the hint thrown out by Nerina was not loſt on him; but as yet undetermined whether he ſhould adopt it or not, he reſolved at all events to act without a confident.

CHAP. XCII.

——Animum picturâ pascit inani,
Multa gemens ——
Dum stupet, obtutuque hæret defixus in uno.
VIRG.

IN the mean time Laura seemed somewhat better; she had been free from lethargic stupor and faintings for a considerable interval, but still continued languid and dejected, and was in general silent: sometimes she shed tears, and without any obvious cause; at other times she seemed tolerably cheerful, particularly when her brother entered her room; her bodily health upon the whole was greatly better, but her memory and understanding continued impaired: she never inquired for any body, nor seemed to recollect that they existed till they appeared before her, on which it was evident whom she preferred: when

when ſhe ſpoke, it was always in ſhort and unconnected ſentences.

Madame de Seidlits's indiſpoſition confined her almoſt conſtantly to her chamber, ſo that Signora Sporza, Captain Seidlits, and her maids, were the only perſons, beſides the phyſician, whom Laura ſaw.

One morning after Zeluco had rode out, Signora Sporza and Seidlits, by the Phyſician's permiſſion, conducted Laura from her own apartment to a higher chamber, from whence there was a very commanding proſpect. She ſat for ſome time at the window, looking with complacency at the beautiful and varied ſcenery before her eyes, while Seidlits pointed out the particular objects. Both he and Signora Sporza were delighted with the compoſure of mind which Laura retained on this occaſion.

She then roſe and walked about the room, till a picture which hung on the wall engaged her attention: the ſubject was the Maſſacre of the Innocents.—The inſtant that ſhe perceived it, ſhe ſtarted and betrayed

trayed great emotion, but her eyes ſoon were riveted on one particular group; it conſiſted of a mother ſtruggling with a fierce ſoldier, who with one hand aimed a poignard at her infant, while with the other he graſped the child by the throat.

When Signora Sporza perceived what peculiarly engroſſed Laura's attention, ſhe endeavoured to remove her from the picture: it was not in her power. Laura was faſcinated to the ſpot; ſhe held her friend with a rigid graſp, while, with her face projected, her eyes devoured the group. "What is the meaning of this? what alarms you, my ſiſter?" cried Seidlits.—Laura turned to him with a diſtracted glance, and then pointing with her finger to the aſſaſſin who graſped the child, ſhe cried with a voice of wildneſs and terror,—"Look!—look!"—and being immediately ſeized with convulſions, ſhe was in that ſtate carried to bed.

The Phyſician preſcribed ſome calming medicines, notwithſtanding which the convulſions and ſpaſms continued at intervals

for

for near two hours, when they abated, and ſhe fell into a ſlumber.

When Captain Seidlits underſtood that Laura was in this ſtate, he had the curioſity to return to the room in which ſhe was taken ill; and Signora Sporza, excited by the ſame curioſity, left her friend for a few minutes, and followed him. She found Seidlits examining the picture; it happened by a ſingular coincidence, that the face of the aſſaſſinating ſoldier had ſome reſemblance to that of Zeluco. Signora Sporza had not looked long at the picture till ſhe obſerved it; "Almighty Providence!" exclaimed ſhe; "how is this?" and then ſhe looked at Captain Seidlits.

"It is certainly ſo," ſaid he; "I am quite of your opinion."

"What, you perceive a likeneſs?" reſumed ſhe.

"A moſt diabolic likeneſs," anſwered Seidlits.

"But the ſubject was what firſt attracted her notice," continued Signora Sporza.

"Which

"Which confirms my ſuſpicions," ſaid he, "that this accurſed villain ——" As Seidlits raiſed his voice, Signora Sporza, clapping her hand on his mouth, begged him to be more temperate. After ſome converſation, they agreed in the propriety of concealing their ſentiments, till they could get more light into a matter ſo myſterious, and which gave birth to ideas ſo horrid; Captain Seidlits gave her his promiſe to take no ſtep without acquainting her, and ſhe aſſured him of all the aſſiſtance ſhe could give in his endeavours to get at the truth.

But their mutual efforts to this purpoſe were ſuſpended by the increaſing danger of Laura; the ſlumber in which they left her did not continue long, ſhe was reſtleſs, uneaſy, and feveriſh in the night; the feveriſh ſymptoms augmented next day, ſhe was delirious the whole of the following night, and was for three days in ſuch imminent danger that all her attendants *dreaded*, and her huſband *hoped*, that ſhe would

would expire; but all at once, when ſhe ſeemed at the height of danger, ſhe fell into a profound calm and long continued ſleep, at the end of which ſhe awoke entirely free from fever, and with her memory and ſenſes reſtored.

The joy of Signora Sporza and Captain Seidlits on this happy event was ſomewhat mitigated by the fear that Laura's memory being now returned, a recollection of the child's death, and the circumſtances attending it, might produce a relapſe; but whether it was the natural conſequence of that languor to which the fever reduced Laura, or whatever elſe was the cauſe, certain it is that ſhe bore the recollection of the ſcene which firſt occaſioned her illneſs with diminiſhed ſenſibility; her ſorrow was accompanied with none of thoſe violent effects, but ſeemed to be all at once mellowed into a calm uniform melancholy: and the Phyſician gave the moſt flattering hopes of the full reſtoration of her ſtrength and ſpirits, deſiring at the ſame time that nothing

thing ſhould be ſaid during her convaleſcence which alluded to her child.

Laura herſelf perceived that every alluſion of that nature was carefully avoided; but one day, when Signora Sporza was with her alone, ſhe aſked, How her poor mother had borne the ſhock of the child's death; and put ſeveral other queſtions to Signora Sporza, reſpecting the interment of the infant; during the recital, which was given in conſequence of thoſe inquiries, ſhe wept abundantly, but ſoon wiping away her tears, ſhe ſaid, "Why ſhould I be grieved for my child? he has eſcaped many evils to which he muſt have been expoſed had he lived; ſome of them of more importance than that of dying; but his future happineſs is now ſecure."

Signora Sporza finding, to her great ſurpriſe and ſatisfaction, that ſhe could ſpeak with ſuch ſerenity on this ſubject, took occaſion ſometime after to aſk Laura, What ſhe thought gave occaſion to the *convulſions* of which the infant died? From this queſtion

queſtion Laura conceived at once what account Zeluco had given of that tranſaction, and from Signora Sporza's manner, as well as from her ſubſequent inquiries, Laura alſo perceived that her friend had ſuſpicions that his account was not exactly true. To theſe inquiries ſhe anſwered, That it was impoſſible for her to tell what was the cauſe of ſuch fits, but ſhe had often heard that infants were liable to them from various cauſes; and by her manner ſhe plainly ſhewed that ſhe was not inclined to ſpeak more fully on the ſubject. Laura knew that ſhe was the only witneſs of the child's death, and although ſhe had come to a reſolution to take meaſures for being for ever ſeparated from her huſband, ſhe was equally determined not to appear herſelf, or put it in the power of any other perſon to appear, as his accuſer.

During all the time that Laura was diſordered, Zeluco had kept out of her ſight, on the pretence that he could not bear to ſee one ſo dear to him in that melancholy ſtate; the real reaſon was, his dreading

that ſhe would diſcover ſymptoms of horror, and thereby give riſe to ſuſpicions which he was moſt ſolicitous to prevent.

As ſhe was now, to his great ſorrow, much better in her bodily health, and not at all diſordered in other reſpects, he thought it would ſeem very ſingular for him to delay ſeeing her any longer; but being willing to ſound her own inclination in the firſt place, he told the Phyſician he was impatient to ſee his beloved wife, but would not till he ſhould know from him if he could with ſafety. The Phyſician mentioned this to Laura, who immediately declared that ſhe could not as yet bear the company or converſation of any body, except that of her mother, who was now ſomewhat better, or of Signora Sporza; that even theirs, when unuſually prolonged, occaſioned head-ach and feveriſhneſs; ſhe begged, therefore, that no other, not even her brother, or huſband, would think of viſiting her till ſhe was ſtronger. Laura had added her brother, whom ſhe had not ſeen ſince the picture ſcene, to render the

excluſion

excluſion of her huſband the leſs extraordinary.

Ever ſince her mind had recovered its powers, Laura had been reflecting how ſhe ought to proceed in order to obtain a ſeparation from her huſband with the leaſt poſſible eclat or other diſagreeable circumſtance; having reſolved to conceal her prinpal reaſon, ſhe did not chuſe to conſult with her mother, brother, or Signora Sporza, till ſhe had tried what effect an application to Zeluco himſelf would have.—What the Phyſician told her rendered her impatient to make this trial. Having written the following letter, therefore, ſhe ſent it to her huſband, when ſhe knew he was alone in his own apartment.

"To Signor Zeluco.

"You cannot be ſurpriſed, or ſorry to be informed, that it is my unalterable reſolution never to ſee you more.

"I am the only witneſs of the horrid deed.

"I have mentioned it to no mortal, nor ever ſhall, unleſs forced by your refuſal to comply with my propoſal, or by madneſs which a ſight of you might again drive me into.

"The plan of ſeparation ſhall be propoſed by me to my friends, and on a pretext which cannot affect you; all I require is your concurrence that it may take place without noiſe or difficulty.

"I demand no ſettlement;—but ſhall delay mentioning this affair to my relations till my mother's health is a little better eſtabliſhed, which there is every appearance will be very ſoon.

"Do not think of turning me from my purpoſe; the attempt alone will involve you in trouble.

"I deſire no anſwer but a ſimple aſſent, and ſhall ever pray that the mercy of Heaven may be extended to you.

LAURA SEIDLITS."

Zeluco was preparing to go abroad when he received this letter; he changed his purpoſe,

poſe, and remained in his apartment the whole day.

He was at firſt ſo much exaſperated, that he had thoughts of burſting into Laura's apartment, demanding an explanation of what ſhe had written, with a view of intimidating her into ſilence, by threats of confining her for life as a diſtracted woman, if ſhe dared to accuſe him. But a very little reflexion convinced him of the danger ſuch a meaſure would be attended with; beſides, he ſaw that no colouring of his would efface the impreſſion which her ſtory, if ſhe was forced to unfold it, muſt make on a public by no means diſpoſed to think with partiality of him. Zeluco, therefore, determined on this occaſion to bridle the impetuoſity of his rage, and make both his pride and humour obey the dictates of prudence; he relinquiſhed every openly violent meaſure, and ſent the following anſwer to Laura:

"ALTHOUGH I understand not what some parts of your letter allude to, I agree to your proposal of separation; when you mention this matter to your relations, you will let them know, that although this proceeds entirely from a piece of humour of your own, unsought by me, yet I am willing to give you a reasonable annuity for life."

Laura was greatly pleased with this answer; she was resolved to accept of no settlement from Zeluco, but thought it best to say nothing on that head, till she should remove from his house. She herself would have preferred returning to Germany, had she not feared it would be disagreeable to her mother, and had she not mistrusted her own heart, which she was conscious suggested that measure from partiality to Carlostein. The plan, therefore, which she resolved to adopt immediately after the separation was, to take refuge, for some time at least, in a convent at Naples,

or perhaps at Rome or Florence, where ſhe could board at a very moderate expence; and having determined to acquaint no mortal with the chief reaſon of this ſeparation, ſhe expected to meet with difficulty in convincing her mother of its propriety; and therefore ſhe watched the advance of her health, that ſhe might mention it at a time when ſhe would ſuffer little from the uneaſineſs it would give her.

CHAP. XCIII.

Me, me (adſum qui feci), in me convertite ferrum.
VIRG.

CAPTAIN Seidlits informed his friend Carloſtein of the effect which the ſight of the picture had on Laura; alſo of his own and Signora Sporza's ſuſpicions relating to the child's death and the mother's illneſs, which ſuſpicions acquired new ſtrength from the ſecond illneſs of Laura, and the ſingular manner in which it had originated. While Laura continued in danger, the minds of her relations were ſo much agitated, that they could think of nothing elſe; but when the danger was over, and it appeared that the criſis of the fever had not only thrown off the bodily diſeaſe but alſo the mental diſorder, Seidlits reſumed his conferences with Carloſtein reſpecting the myſterious circumſtances which

which accompanied the child's death, and had occurred ſince; and Carloſtein expreſſing a great deſire to ſee the picture, Seidlits conducted him one day to the room in which it hung.

"There is the villain!" ſaid Seidlits, pointing to the figure of the ſoldier with the poignard. "Obſerve with what fury he aims at the child."——Carloſtein continued to examine the group with ſilent attention.

"It is true," reſumed Seidlits, "that there was no wound on the body of my ſiſter's infant."

"But obſerve," ſaid Carloſtein, "with what force the murderer *graſps* that child by the throat.

"Do you not ſee the reſemblance which ſtrikes Signora Sporza?" continued Seidlits, not having perceived the import of Carloſtein's remark.

"Yes; I perceive ſomething of that nature; not a great deal however," anſwered Carloſtein, who already repented of the

insinuation which had escaped him, for he wished not to strengthen his friend's suspicions without stronger evidence.

"The resemblance seems to me very evident," said Seidlits.

"Perhaps there is some resemblance," added Carlostein; "such things occur often enough."

"Do you not think it would strike the villain himself, were he to see it?" said Seidlits.

"I should think not," replied Carlostein, who dreaded the consequence of his friend's retaining that idea.

"Pray lend me your pencil," said Seidlits; "it *shall* strike him, by heaven! if he ever looks at it."

He immediately wrote over the figure of the soldier, the name of *Zeluco*.—"There," said he, "now, it will be impossible for him to mistake his representative."

Carlostein endeavoured to prevail upon his friend to obliterate what he had written; but finding him obstinate, he determined

to

to get Signora Sporza to do it before there was any probability of Zeluco's entering that room.

As Carloſtein and Seidlits walked out of the court, they met Zeluco. Carloſtein having received the pencil, ſtill held it in his hand, but ſeeing his friend's eyes kindle at the approach of Zeluco, he whiſpered, "Pray, ſay nothing to him at preſent."—"I muſt give him a ſlight hint," replied Seidlits; and then ſaid aloud to Zeluco, "We were examining the picture, Signor, which affected my ſiſter ſo violently."

"What picture?" ſaid Zeluco. "I know nothing of a picture."

Signora Sporza had concealed that incident carefully from him; having only informed him that Laura had relapſed ſuddenly, without mentioning the cauſe.

"By much the moſt intereſting piece in your collection," replied Seidlits; "it had almoſt proved fatal to your wife: pray examine it carefully, and when we next meet, I ſhall be glad to know how you reliſh it." Having ſaid this, Seidlits walked on, and

Carloſtein

Carloſtein whiſpered Zeluco, "There is a name written *with this pencil* over the principal figure; if you wiſh for any further eclairciſſement, apply to me.—I ſhall be at home in leſs than an hour, and ready to give you whatever ſatisfaction you deſire."

Carloſtein was fully perſuaded that the conſequence of Zeluco's looking at the picture, with the ſtyle in which Seidlits had directed him to it, muſt be a perſonal quarrel between them; he knew that Laura dreaded nothing more than ſuch an event, and well remembered with what earneſtneſs ſhe had intreated him, if he ſhould ever ſee any appearance of that kind, to do every thing in his power to prevent it. She had once ſaid, talking on that ſubject to Signora Sporza, that ſhe would conſider this as the greateſt obligation that any perſon could confer upon her. He had accordingly endeavoured as much as he could to prevail on Seidlits to obliterate the name; he had reſolved to write to Signora Sporza to do what Seidlits refuſed; and he had tried to

prevent

prevent Seidlits from addreſſing Zeluco in the manner he did. Having failed in all, he ſaw no means of obviating a perſonal conteſt between the huſband and brother of Laura, but by drawing the reſentment of Zeluco from Seidlits to himſelf; this having ſtruck him inſtantly, he whiſpered Zeluco as has been mentioned.

Carloſtein had alſo another reaſon for being ſolicitous to prevent Seidlits from meeting Zeluco in the field; he knew the latter to be far more ſkilful and expert in the uſe of the ſmall ſword than his friend. He had often ſeen them fence together, and Zeluco had an evident ſuperiority even when he did not exert his whole powers. Although Seidlits had been as fully convinced of this as his friend, which he was not, it would, on the preſent occaſion, have had no weight with him. Piſtols were out of the queſtion, no ſuch weapon being uſed in affairs of this nature in Italy. Carloſtein imagined himſelf rather a more ſkilful fencer than Seidlits, though conſcious of being by much inferior to Zeluco,

luco, who was accounted one of the beſt in the kingdom of Naples.

When the two friends had walked a little way after quitting Zeluco, Seidlits turning round to Carloſtein, who followed him, ſaid, "I ſhall certainly hear from him this afternoon or to-morrow."

"I dare ſwear," anſwered Carloſtein, "he will take till to-morrow to conſider in what manner he is to aſk an explanation of the words which you addreſſed to him."

"I ſhall give him a very brief and clear explanation whenever he does," ſaid Seidlits.

"Suppoſe," reſumed Carloſtein, "he ſhould be able to explain to your ſatisfaction the circumſtances which ſeem ſo diſmally myſterious to us."

"I ſhall make an apology without heſitation," ſaid Seidlits. "But you will *attend me* in caſe we do go out?"

"Of courſe," replied Carloſtein. "If I remember, you are engaged to dinner at our miniſter's.—You go, I ſuppoſe?"

"I cannot do otherwiſe," ſaid Seidlits; "but I will leave word with Targe to bring me any meſſage."

"I am convinced you will have none before to-morrow," rejoined Carloſtein; "and if no accommodation takes place you will probably arrange matters for the following morning:—at all events, I ſhall have a poſt-chaiſe prepared to carry you directly to the eccleſiaſtical ſtate."

"Pray do," ſaid Seidlits, "for I am confident I ſhall do his buſineſs for all his vaunted ſkill:—there is ſome difference between a foil and a ſword. Adieu, I muſt dreſs for dinner,—You dine with Mr. N—, do you not?"

"I do," replied Carloſtein; "but we ſhall meet in the evening." They ſeparated.

Zeluco had obſerved ſomething fierce and menacing in the countenances both of Carloſtein and Seidlits; he was much more ſurpriſed at this in the former than in the latter, becauſe Carloſtein and he had always been apparently, at leaſt, on the moſt friendly

friendly footing. He could not comprehend the import of what was ſaid by either. On going up ſtairs, he demanded of one of Laura's maids, in what room her miſtreſs was when ſhe was laſt taken ill. On entering the room, he threw his eyes in a curſory manner over the pictures, but the moment he perceived the maſſacre of the innocents, his heart ſhrunk within him, and he was convinced that this muſt be the piece in queſtion; with a trembling ſtep he approached nearer to the picture, and having diſtinguiſhed the ſoldier graſping the neck of the child, he ſtarted back, as if the poignard had been aimed at his own breaſt:—after a pauſe, he advanced again, forcing his averted eyes once more on the picture, and with horror and diſmay obſerved his own name inſcribed over the head of the ſoldier.

Perplexed, confounded, and terrified, he ſhrunk down upon a chair, and as ſoon as he was able to walk, he ſtole down ſtairs, and ſhut himſelf up in his own apartment.

He had promiſed to paſs that evening with Nerina, but finding himſelf in a ſtate of ſuch perturbation, quite undetermined what meaſures to adopt, not daring to inform her or any other perſon of the cauſe of his perplexity; he ſent a verbal meſſage by the ſervant uſually employed by them, importing, That he was taken ſuddenly ill, and therefore could not poſſibly wait on her at the appointed time; but if he found himſelf better, he ſhould have that pleaſure the following evening.

Having diſmiſſed the footman with this meſſage, he continued in painful reflexion on theſe extraordinary incidents; he could no longer doubt of both Seidlits and Carloſtein's having ſtrong ſuſpicions of his being the cauſe of the child's death and Laura's illneſs: he was impreſſed alſo with the notion that thoſe ſuſpicions were conveyed to them by Laura, either deſignedly, when ſhe recovered her memory, or undeſignedly, during the ravings of her diſorder: in either caſe ſhe was the object of his undiſtinguiſhing vengeance.

His former plan of treating her as a mad woman, he ſaw would not be of any uſe now, when, to his infinite mortification, ſhe was perfectly recovered. He felt the neceſſity under which he was to demand an explanation of Seidlits and Carloſtein. As the expreſſions which Carloſtein had whiſpered were the moſt direct and pointed, he reſolved to begin with him. Yet ſhould the effect of this be a duel, he plainly ſaw, that by attracting the public attention, and exciting inquiries, it would produce a great many of thoſe conſequences he ſo anxiouſly wiſhed to prevent.

In this ſtate of heſitation and direful perplexity, how often did this wretched man wiſh for a friend to whom he could with ſafety unboſom himſelf, and from whom he might receive counſel and conſolation? but having in the whole courſe of his life been the friend of no man, he well knew that no man was his friend. He could hardly meet an eye even in his own family, which he did not ſuſpect of looking on him with

averſion, either from love for Laura, or direct hatred for him.

After weighing all the difficulties and dangers, a great choice of which preſented themſelves to his mind, he could form no fixed plan of future conduct, but in the mean time thought himſelf abſolutely bound without farther heſitation to go and talk to Carloſtein.

In all caſes where he was not diſturbed by conſcience, which makes cowards of us all, Zeluco had leſs perſonal fear than moſt people; but as he was equally devoid of principle, his notions on the ſubject of duelling were ſomewhat ſingular.

One of his maxims was, that a man who injured another might, conſiſtently with good ſenſe, and ought, from a regard to his own character, to fight the perſon he had injured, the moment he was required; but he thought it in the higheſt degree ſilly and abſurd in the injured perſon to take ſuch a dangerous and precarious method of obtaining reparation; juſtice and common ſenſe would dictate, he

imagined, ſome more certain plan of vengeance, except indeed the injury was known to the public, or of a nature which admitted of no delay. In ſuch caſes, a regard to the world's opinion ſuperſeded every other conſideration. His preſent buſineſs with Carloſtein he conſidered in this laſt claſs; he had no doubt of Carloſtein's having communicated to Seidlits and to others what he had whiſpered to himſelf: therefore, notwithſtanding that he conſidered himſelf as the injured perſon, not the injurer, he thought it incumbent on him to demand an explanation in the uſual mode; being determined however not to bring matters to the laſt extremity, if he could find any plauſible means of avoiding it; not that he feared the iſſue of the duel, being too confident in his own ſkill to harbour any doubt; but merely becauſe he wiſhed, if poſſible, to avoid every meaſure which might tend to make an eclat, or lead to inquiries into the cauſe of the quarrel.

CHAP. XCIV.

What ſtronger breaſt-plate than a heart untainted?
Thrice is he arm'd that has his quarrel juſt;
And he but naked, though lock'd up in ſteel,
Whoſe conſcience with injuſtice is corrupted.

SHAKESPEARE.

ZELUCO found Carloſtein, as he expected, alone. "You will not be ſurpriſed at ſeeing me, Sir, after your late behaviour," ſaid Zeluco.

"I am not ſurpriſed," replied Carloſtein.

"You promiſed me an explanation," added Zeluco.

"Propoſe your difficulty," rejoined Carloſtein, "and you'll find me as good as my word."

"I was deſired to examine a picture," ſaid Zeluco, fiercely.

"Which I preſume you have done," added Carloſtein, with calmneſs.

"I *have*," answered Zeluco; "and I find somebody has had the insolence to inscribe my name over one of the figures."

"You could not miss it," said Carlostein; "it was very distinctly written with this pencil;" taking the pencil out of his pocket;—"but there was no insolence intended."

"What was intended then?" said Zeluco, in somewhat of a milder tone, for he began to imagine that Carlostein meant to explain it in a friendly or jocular manner.

"It was intended," replied Carlostein, in a sedate and solemn accent, "to signify the conformity of character and conduct between you and a murderer."

This answer, being rather unexpected, disconcerted Zeluco a little; but recovering himself, he said, "You can have but one meaning by such behaviour, Sir; I expect you will meet me to-morrow morning."

"Wherever you are pleased to appoint," said Carlostein.

After

After ſome farther converſation, they agreed to meet at a remote ſpot which happened to be near the villa where Nerina dwelt, and at an early hour; each to be attended by a friend.

"I preſume," ſaid Zeluco, "Captain Seidlits will accompany you."

"He is the very laſt man I ſhould think of on this occaſion; neither Captain Seidlits, nor any other perſon, except the gentleman who *is* to attend me, ſhall know of what has paſſed between us; for this I pledge my honour." As Carloſtein pronounced the laſt ſentence, he looked at Zeluco as if he expected an aſſurance to the ſame purpoſe from him.

"None but a coward would act otherwiſe," ſaid Zeluco.

"It is well," ſaid Carloſtein. "Now, Signor, your weapon?"

"The ſword, unqueſtionably," replied Zeluco.

"Although you are the challenger, and I am not ignorant of your dexterity at

that particular weapon, I agree," ſaid Carloſtein.

"If you have any objection to the weapon of a gentleman, you ſhould have thought of it before you inſulted one," ſaid Zeluco.

"I have told you," ſaid Carloſtein, "that I agree."

Immediately on their ſeparating, Carloſtein informed Mr. N—— of all that had paſſed; and aſked the favour of his accompanying him to the place of rendezvous.

Mr. N—— accepted the invitation, after having expreſſed his admiration of the generous conduct of Carloſtein; for he plainly perceived, notwithſtanding Carloſtein's having paſſed over that circumſtance, that he had provoked the quarrel, to prevent Seidlits from being engaged in it. Carloſtein begged that he would let nothing eſcape him, in caſe of his meeting Seidlits, that could give him any ſuſpicion of what was intended. Mr. N—— aſſured him he would be on his guard. "But I am afraid," added

added he, "that, by your eagerneſs to prevent Laura from the danger of loſing a brother, you expoſe her to a misfortune which ſhe will feel with ſtill ſeverer anguiſh."

Carloſtein made no other anſwer to this obſervation of Mr. N——'s, than a gentle inclination of the head.

The generous friendſhip of Mr. N—— for Carloſtein was increaſed, and not diminiſhed, by the great regard which he had long obſerved Laura had for him. What gave him moſt uneaſineſs in the buſineſs of the following morning was, the fear of any fatal accident happening to Carloſtein, which, although he ſhould regret on his own account, he was of a character to regret doubly on account of the affliction it would occaſion to Laura.

When Carloſtein met Seidlits in the evening, he told him, That he had as yet heard nothing from Zeluco.

Carloſtein anſwered, That he was convinced there would be no meſſage till next day; "indeed," added he, "I think you had

had beſt keep out of his way for this evening; let him digeſt what he has already got, before you give him any new provocation.

"If a ſight of me diſturbs his digeſtion," ſaid Seidlits, "he muſt keep out of my way, for I ſhall certainly take no pains to keep out of his; nor will I circumſcribe my walks or viſits on account of any man alive."

"I only meant for this evening," rejoined Carloſtein.

"Well," interrupted Seidlits, "if he wiſhes not to meet me this evening, he had beſt not appear at the Corſo; for I am engaged with ſome company there about this time, and ſhall go directly; perhaps you will go with me."—Carloſtein excuſed himſelf, after begging of his friend to return ſoon to their lodgings. He was particularly ſolicitous to prevent Seidlits from meeting with Zeluco that evening, foreſeeing that it might entirely defeat the plan he had already ſettled for the next morning.

In

In the mean while, Zeluco, wiſhing to conceal the ſource of this diſpute as long as poſſible, did not chuſe to apply to any perſon acquainted with Seidlits or Laura to accompany him next morning, leſt they ſhould make inquiries which he might not chuſe to anſwer; he therefore waited on Bertram the Genevois, and as an old brother officer, and a perſon of whoſe gallant ſpirit he had an high opinion, begged he would accompany him the following morning on an affair of honour with a foreign officer, who, he ſaid, had inſulted him.

Bertram heſitated, and expreſſed a deſire of knowing the particulars of the quarrel; "Is there no poſſibility," ſaid he, "of accommodating the affair?"

Zeluco aſſured him he had been inſulted in ſuch a manner as no gentleman could bear, without a very ample apology; and then, to prevent his inſiſting on knowing the particulars, added, "If my antagoniſt agrees to make ſuch an apology as you ſhall

ſhall think ſufficient, I aſſure you that it ſhall ſatisfy me."

Bertram then conſented, in the hope that it would be in his power to bring the affair to an amicable termination. On being informed of the place, he recollected it perfectly, having frequently taken notice of it during the various excurſions which he had made ſince his arrival at Naples; and he promiſed to call on Zeluco preciſely at the hour appointed.

When Zeluco returned home he found the following letter from Nerina:

"MERCIFUL Heaven! what is the matter with you? What am I to think of a verbal meſſage of ſuch cruel import? Do you not know how my ſoul doats on you? Do you not know how miſerably I paſs the lingering moments which cruel fate obliges me to ſpend out of your company?—Or, are you ſo ill that you cannot write?—Ah! let me not palliate your conduct by a ſuppoſition which would render me more wretched

than

than even your neglect. No; let me be bleſt in the certainty of your recovery; and I will endeavour to ſupport whatever other misfortune may befal me. Let me know by the bearer at what hour I may expect you to-morrow. But I earneſtly intreat, that no conſideration, which ſolely regards me, may induce you to venture out ſooner than it can be done with ſafety to your health; that I may not purchaſe a tranſient happineſs at the price of a whole life of deſpair. Alas! why am I not permitted to tend you, to watch you through the ſleepleſs night, and endeavour to cheer the gloom of ſickneſs? that were happineſs indeed, when compared to the tortures of abſence and uncertainty. Write, or rather let your valet write, a ſhort line to the wretched

"NERINA."

Zeluco was himſelf a great diſſembler, exceedingly profuſe in compliments and profeſſions of attachment, naturally ſuſpicious, and generally acute in diſcovering the

the concealed motives and deſigns of others; yet the cajoleries of this woman lulled his uſual diffidence, and his penetration was the dupe of his vanity.

Had he ſeen ſuch a letter as this from any woman to another man, he would have been inſtantly convinced that the artful effuſion was dictated by affected, not real, paſſion; and he would have conſidered it as weakneſs and vanity in any man to be impoſed upon by it for a moment; yet ſuch is the faſcination of ſelf-love, that he thought the ſame ſentiments ſincere and natural when he was himſelf their object, that he would have conſidered as extravagant and deceitful had they been addreſſed to another man. His anſwer was couched in the following words:

"My deareſt NERINA,

"MAKE yourſelf eaſy—I am ſomewhat better already. Your affectionate letter has contributed to my recovery. When my ſervant left me, I could not write without pain; but had I thought of the uneaſineſs

which

which the omiſſion would give you, I ſhould not have permitted him to return without a letter. I may poſſibly have it in my power to wait on you to-morrow at dinner, certainly not ſooner; at any rate you will hear from me, and you need not expect me, nor ſend any meſſage till then.

"I remain moſt affectionately

"Yours, *&c. &c.*"

CHAP. XCV.

——— quo modo adoleſcentulus
Meretricum ingenia et mores poſſet noſcere:
Mature ut cum cognorit, perpetuo oderit.
TERENT.

IMMEDIATELY after engaging Bertram to accompany him to the field, Zeluco took precautions to inſure his own eſcape out of the kingdom of Naples, in caſe it ſhould be neceſſary; he next employed himſelf in burning certain papers, in arranging others; and having prepared whatever he thought neceſſary, and given orders to his ſervant at what hour to call him in the morning, he went to bed in the hope of being refreſhed by ſleep before his meeting with Carloſtein; but ſuch a tempeſt of diſtracting thoughts ruſhed on his mind as totally deprived him of repoſe. The violent impreſſion which the ſight of the painted murder of a child had made

on

on Laura, with which he thought even her maids were acquainted, was ſufficient to create a pretty general ſuſpicion of the real fact. What had been written to him by Laura, ſtrongly hinted by Seidlits, and directly aſſerted by Carloſtein, were evidences that they all believed him to be acceſſary to the death of the child. And he often curſed the unlucky incidents by which, while he was projecting a ſcheme of ſecure revenge againſt his wife and her brother, he found himſelf unavoidably engaged in a conteſt, on equal terms, with a third perſon, againſt whom he never before had harboured any enmity. In the event of his killing Carloſtein, of which he had little doubt, it ſtruck him that Laura, or perhaps her brother, might during his abſence mention ſuch circumſtances relative to the child's death, as would give the public an impreſſion againſt him, which they themſelves, ſhould they be ſo inclined afterwards, might not be able to efface.

This idea prompted him to riſe and to write a letter addreſſed to Laura, in which

he cautioned her in general terms not to allow any expreſſion to eſcape her which might injure him during his temporary abſence; and adviſing her to admoniſh her brother to the ſame effect; for that any thing of that nature would prove ruinous to themſelves, and would moſt materially injure her mother. This letter he ſealed and put into his pocket, intending to ſend it to her from the field, in caſe it ſhould be neceſſary after his buſineſs with Carloſtein was over.

The picture and the inſcription came next into his recollection; he had already locked the door of the room, and put the key into his eſcritore; but now, all the family being aſleep, he ſtole again to the room, unfixed the picture from the wall, brought it into his own bed-chamber, and burnt it to aſhes.

He threw himſelf again into his bed, but with as little ſucceſs as before; a retroſpect of his paſt life, which obtruded itſelf upon his mind in ſpite of all his endeavours to exclude it, and the dread of the world's

ſoon

ſoon reviewing it in the ſame light that he himſelf did, with a confuſed proſpect of conſequences which he dreaded without knowing how to prevent, baniſhed ſleep from his pillow. He roſe, and walked with precipitation about his chamber, as if he could have diſſipated the uneaſineſs of his mind by the agitation of his body. Nerina's letter lay on the table—he read it once more, and with redoubled complacency.—Convinced of the ſincerity of *her* attachment, he could not flatter himſelf with the friendſhip of another perſon on earth :—in moments of difficulty and diſtreſs, it is natural for the moſt arrogant and ſtubborn of the human race to wiſh for the ſupport of friendſhip and of love, however powerleſs the perſon is in whoſe breaſt they reſide. There was yet an interval of two or three hours to the time at which Bertram was to call for him. In the ſtate of anxiety and impatience in which Zeluco was, it appeared an age.

With what a leaden and retarding weight
Does expectation load the wings of time * ?

* Maſon.

This fine obſervation of the poet is not only highly applicable where he places it, but is alſo juſt when the mind is agitated with the thoughts of any important event which we know to be unavoidable, and have no hopes of tranquillity till it has taken place. Zeluco had ſometimes found that Nerina had the art of unloading the wings of time; and being ſeized with an irreſiſtible deſire of paſſing the interval till he ſhould meet Carloſtein with her, he ordered his horſes to be got ready, and wrote the following note directed to Bertram:

"DEAR BERTRAM,

"I HAVE ordered two horſes to be ready, one for you, the other for the ſervant, who will deliver you this, and then accompany you to the appointed place, where you will find me waiting your arrival. I will then inform you why I ſet out before you.

"I am your aſſured friend,

"and obliged ſervant,

"ZELUCO."

Having

Having given the neceſſary directions to the ſervant who waited for Bertram, he ſet out, attended by another ſervant, for the habitation of Nerina, where he arrived a little after day-break.

Confident of a cordial welcome at all hours, he entered without knocking, by the means of a key which he kept for that purpoſe. Being obliged to paſs through the parlour in his way to the bed-chamber of Nerina, he was ſomewhat ſurpriſed to find her maid up at ſo early an hour. The maid was ſtill more ſurpriſed at ſeeing him. He aſked how her miſtreſs was, and without waiting for her anſwer, walked towards Nerina's chamber.

"Maria Vergine!" cried the maid, running between him and the door.

"What is the matter?" ſaid Zeluco.

"Lord, Sir!" cried the maid, "you cannot ſee my miſtreſs at preſent."

"Why not?"

"Dear Sir," replied the maid, "only ſtay in the parlour, till I acquaint my miſtreſs that you are here?"

"Pſha!" ſaid Zeluco, puſhing her aſide.

"O Lord, Sir!" cried the maid, taking hold of his coat, "you will terrify my miſtreſs out of her ſenſes, if you go in to her at this unſeaſonable hour."

"Get along;" ſaid Zeluco, ſhaking her from him.

"My miſtreſs is indiſpoſed, Sir; ſhe is extremely ill," ſaid the maid.

"Ill!" cried Zeluco.

"Yes," ſaid the maid; "ſhe has been exceedingly ill theſe two days."

"She did not mention that in the letter I received from her yeſterday."

"No! that is very odd, indeed," cried the maid, "but ſhe has forgot it; for you know my miſtreſs ſometimes has but an indifferent memory. Pray, Sir, be ſo obliging as to return to the parlour, till I inform my miſtreſs that you are come; when I have informed her, I dare ſwear ſhe will be very happy to ſee you. But ——"

"Peace, babler," cried Zeluco, puſhing her aſide, and walking through the paſſage towards Nerina's bed-chamber.

"Pray,

"Pray, Signor Zeluco, ſtay in the parlour; indeed, Signor Zeluco, you'll frighten my miſtreſs,—dear Signor Zeluco,—I proteſt, Signor Zeluco," following him through the paſſage, and raiſing her voice louder and louder; but perceiving him puſhing with violence at the door of the bed-chamber, ſhe ſcreamed, "O, my poor miſtreſs will be murdered," and immediately the voice of Nerina was heard from within, ſhrieking and crying out, "Murder! rape! murder! villain! monſter, be gone!"

Zeluco drew his ſword, drove the door open with a violent kick of his foot, and to his utter aſtoniſhment, ſaw a man, half-dreſſed, ſtanding by the bed of Nerina.

"What is your buſineſs here, ſcoundrel?" cried Zeluco, furious with rage, and making a puſh at him with his ſword.

The fellow very dexterouſly put the ſword aſide with one hand, plunged a ſtiletto into the bowels of Zeluco with the other, and made his eſcape.

Zeluco fell to the ground.

Nerina, who had continued ſcreaming from the bed, ſeeing Zeluco fall, ſprang up, exclaiming, "Oh! the villain has murdered my dear Lord," kneeling down by him, and offering her aid.

"Be gone, perfidious wretch!" ſaid Zeluco, with a faint voice.

With loud lamentations ſhe took all the ſaints of heaven, with the angels and bleſſed martyrs, to witneſs, that ſhe was innocent as the chaſte Suſanna, or the Holy Virgin herſelf; for that the villain had concealed himſelf in her chamber, with an intention to rob or murder her; and that being awaked by the voice of her maid in the paſſage, ſhe had perceived him for the firſt time, and inſtantly cried out.

Zeluco, without ſeeming to regard her, deſired the maid to call in his own ſervant.

As ſoon as with his aſſiſtance he was placed on the bed, a meſſage was diſpatched to Naples for ſurgeons.

The

The man who ſtabbed Zeluco, we had not occaſion to mention before, although he was an old acquaintance of Nerina's. He was originally a rope-dancer; ſhe had firſt ſeen him at Venice, where he was greatly admired for his ſhape, ſtrength, and agility. She found means to prevail on him to quit his profeſſion, and attach himſelf entirely to her ſervice; he had come with her firſt to Rome, where he attended her as a ſervant out of livery, and afterwards accompanied her to Naples. Zeluco, ſoon after his connexion with Nerina, ſaw ſomething in this man's appearance which he did not reliſh; and he gave her a hint to that effect. Nerina inſtantly diſmiſſed him with ſuch an air of indifference, as diſſipated certain ideas which began to ariſe in the ſuſpicious mind of Zeluco. The diſmiſſion however was of little importance; the man remained ſecretly at Naples, and was admitted to the bed-chamber of Nerina, when ſhe thought herſelf ſecure of not being viſited by Zeluco: thoſe interviews were unknown to all the ſervants except Nerina's

confidential

confidential maid, who was actually ſitting up for the purpoſe of letting him out before the other ſervants ſhould get up, when Zeluco entered ſo unexpectedly.

When Nerina heard the voice of her maid, ſhe comprehended the reaſons of her noiſy remonſtrances, and perceiving that Zeluco was breaking into the room, ſhe inſtantly formed a reſolution worthy of her abandoned character: ſhe ſcreamed and accuſed her paramour of violence, with a view to convince Zeluco of her own innocence, and inſtigate him to put the man to death as a houſebreaker. The ſcene however took a different turn, and Zeluco ſaw the whole in a true point of view.

When the perſon who was ſent to Naples for the ſurgeons was returning, he met Bertram, who had juſt mounted his horſe, and, accompanied by the other ſervant, was going to the rendezvous; this perſon knowing Zeluco's ſervant, informed him of the misfortune which had happened to his maſter. Bertram deſired to be conducted

as

as faſt as poſſible to the houſe where Zeluco lay.

They overtook Carloſtein and Mr. N—, who were riding to the appointed place. Bertram informed Mr. N—— of what he had juſt heard, and they all rode to the dwelling of Nerina.

Carloſtein and Mr. N—— remained in the parlour, while Bertram introduced the ſurgeon and his aſſiſtant into the room in which Zeluco was. He ſtretched forth his hand to Bertram, ſaying, "I am glad to ſee you; when my wound has been examined, I wiſh to have ſome converſation with you. In the mean time," added he, pointing to Nerina, "let that woman be ſecured and kept ſeparate from her maid; ſhe is the cauſe of what has happened."

Zeluco had kept his own ſervant by him from the time he received the wound till Bertram with the others arrived; Nerina had alſo remained conſtantly in the room, and had often renewed her lamentations. Zeluco took no other notice of her, than

by

by begging of her not to make a noiſe, for he was in great pain. His eyes were now open to her true character, and ſhe attempted in vain to deceive him any more; yet he explained himſelf only by keeping a ſteady ſilence till Bertram came.

A more unpleaſant party than this muſt have been, can hardly be conceived, conſiſting of Zeluco lying wounded on the bed of Nerina; Nerina herſelf in the moſt agonizing ſtate of ſuſpenſe. The ſervant of Zeluco was the only perſon of the company tolerably at his eaſe, and *he* was rather anxious that his maſter ſhould die, that he might be relieved from a troubleſome attendance; and that Nerina, whom he heartily hated, might be hanged.

But when ſhe heard herſelf ſo plainly accuſed by Zeluco, in the directions he addreſſed to Bertram, ſhe began to vindicate her innocence with all that violence of vociferation which ſo often attends guilt. Being forced out of the room by the company, ſhe and her maid were ſecured in ſeparate chambers.

Zeluco

Zeluco ſuffered great pain while the ſtate of his wound was examined; after dreſſing it, however, the ſurgeon gave him hopes of recovery, but declared it neceſſary that he ſhould be kept quiet, which, as he found himſelf eaſier and inclined to ſleep after the dreſſing, Zeluco agreed to. He earneſtly begged of Bertram not to leave the houſe, who aſſuring him he had no ſuch intentions, they all left the room except one ſervant.

Bertram then joined Mr. N—— and Carloſtein in the parlour, with the ſurgeon, who was the ſame that had formerly attended Zeluco. He ſpoke more dubiouſly of his recovery to theſe gentlemen than he had done to the patient himſelf; and leaving an aſſiſtant to be at hand in caſe of accident, he ſet out for Naples, promiſing to return in the morning.

Bertram, with a frankneſs which belonged to his character, and which was encouraged by the appearance and manners of Carloſtein, informed him by what accident he himſelf came there, and of the

whole of his connexion with Zeluco; he expreſſed a deſire of knowing what was the origin of their quarrel, for he underſtood that Carloſtein was the perſon Zeluco was to have met, had he not been prevented by the accident juſt mentioned.

Carloſtein refrained from mentioning the real ſource of the quarrel, ſaying, it was an unlucky buſineſs, of a delicate nature, which he was not at liberty to reveal; expreſſing at the ſame time a humane concern for the condition of Zeluco, and the higheſt eſteem for Bertram, with whoſe character Mr. N—— had acquainted him.

Carloſtein and Mr. N—— were ſtill converſing with Bertram, when the officers of juſtice arrived. Zeluco being acquainted with this, deſired to ſee them; in the bittereſt terms he accuſed Nerina of being an accomplice of the fellow who had ſtabbed him; declared that he recollected this man to be the ſame whom ſhe had brought to Naples in her ſervice, and had diſmiſſed at his requeſt. Nerina did not ſuſpect that Zeluco had recognized this man; ſhe there-

fore denied that she had ever seen him; but the maid, who was examined apart, acknowledged that he was the person who had formerly been in Nerina's service, and with whom she had been connected ever since. They were both carried to prison.

CHAP. XCVI.

Carloſtein viſits Zeluco.

ZELUCO having demanded of Bertram whether he had heard any thing of the gentleman whom he was to have met, Bertram informed him that Carloſtein was then in the houſe, and of his humane behaviour ever ſince he had heard of the unlucky accident.

Zeluco expreſſing a deſire to ſpeak with him alone, Carloſtein was introduced.

"It is doubtful, Signor," ſaid Zeluco, "when, or if ever, it will be in my power to meet you in the way we had agreed upon; but it would be ſatisfactory to me in the mean time to know whether you and Captain Seidlits received from my wife the impreſſions which both of you ſeem to entertain."

Carloſtein

Carloſtein replied, That both he and Seidlits had received the impreſſions he alluded to from certain circumſtances they had themſelves obſerved, without their having been pointed out by any third perſon whatever; that as for his own part he had never once ſeen Laura ſince her being firſt taken ill, and that he knew ſhe had been at great pains both before and ſince her illneſs, to make her brother believe that ſhe lived on the beſt terms with her huſband, and ſeemed extremely unhappy when ſhe perceived that Captain Seidlits ſuſpected the contrary, and had endeavoured by every means to convince him that his ſuſpicion was ill founded.

Zeluco ſeemed ſatisfied with this explanation; "I have a curioſity to know alſo," ſaid he, "if you have no objection, what was your inducement to draw upon yourſelf a quarrel which Captain Seidlits was ſufficiently eager to make his own?"

"As you ſay this will afford you ſatisfaction, Signor," replied Carloſtein, "I ſhall not ſcruple to tell you, that when I

heard Captain Seidlits expreſs himſelf in the manner he did to you at your laſt meeting, I thought it probably would produce a quarrel between you, which might end fatally to one or other; which ever fell, the conſequence would be unfortunate for Madame de Seidlits and her daughter; the former muſt loſe a ſon-in-law, and the latter a brother or huſband; whereas my being your antagoniſt could not have ſuch ill conſequences; if the chance went againſt me, they would be deprived of no ſuch near relation; and even in the event of your falling by my ſword, they would be involved in leſs trouble than if you ſhould owe your death to their neareſt relation."

"It is impoſſible not to admire your conduct, Sir," ſaid Zeluco; "you muſt take a prodigious intereſt in thoſe two ladies."

"There are no two perſons on earth, Signor, for whom I have greater regard; their virtues command the eſteem of all who have the honour of knowing them; but independent of my friendſhip for them,

I will

I will confeſs to you, that another conſideration had weight with me; I am indebted for my own life to the gallantry of Captain Seidlits; I was deſirous therefore of ſeizing, without his knowledge, a chance of repaying what I owed him, by taking the conſequences, whatever they might be, of a meeting with you."

"Captain Seidlits is much to be envied," ſaid Zeluco, with a ſigh, "in having ſuch a friend;—perhaps," continued he, after a pauſe, "it may yet be in my power to convince both you and your friend, that what you have miſtaken in my conduct was intirely owing to the malice and baſe ſuggeſtions of the accurſed woman who is carried to priſon, and who, I truſt, will meet the fate ſhe ſo well deſerves."

To this Carloſtein made no reply; but the Phyſician, who had alſo been ſent for to viſit Zeluco, arriving, put an end to their diſcourſe.

The Phyſician had not met the Surgeon, and of courſe could have no juſt notion of the degree of danger in which Zeluco was;

but finding him pretty free from fever, he ventured to pronounce ſtill more favourably of the caſe than the Surgeon had done; and after giving ſome general directions, took his leave.

Bertram remained at Zeluco's earneſt requeſt, and by his orders had the direction of every thing in the family; for the houſe, and all within it, was the property of Zeluco, except the wearing apparel of Nerina, which ſhe had been permitted to pack up; and what ſhe did not take with her was left under the care of a maid in whom ſhe placed confidence.

Carloſtein and Mr. N—— returned to Naples after hearing the opinion of the Phyſician.

Carloſtein gave his friend Seidlits an account of the whole affair; ſtating it in ſuch a manner, however, that his intended meeting with Zeluco appeared to have been owing to a fortuitous rencounter with him the preceding evening, in which Zeluco had directly challenged him. Seidlits ſeemed diſpleaſed at his friend for concealing this.

"—How could I, my dear Seidlits," ſaid Carloſtein, "ſhuffle over on you the anſwer of a challenge directly addreſſed to myſelf?—Would you have acted ſo?"

"Well," ſaid Seidlits, recovering his good humour, "although, from certain circumſtances which I now recollect, I ſtill ſuſpect that ſome fraudulent practices have taken place on this occaſion, yet I ſhall take no farther notice of them; ſince however," added he, ſmiling, "you tried to rob me of a ſmall ſprig of laurel, I rejoice that it has miſſed your head as well as mine."

They then informed Signora Sporza of all that had happened, leaving it to her to mention it to Madame de Seidlits, when ſhe found a fit opportunity; but they all agreed to keep it concealed from Laura, till the fate of Zeluco ſhould be more fully aſcertained.

Zeluco continued tolerably eaſy till towards midnight, when the pain of his wound became very ſevere; amidſt his

groans he poured forth horrid imprecations againſt Nerina.

The aſſiſtant Surgeon, who had been left to attend him, finding that the fomentations and other means which he uſed to relieve the pain failed, ſpoke of ſending to Naples for ſome laudanum, a few drops of which, he ſaid, might be of ſervice.

Zeluco hearing him give orders for that purpoſe, told the Surgeon to ſearch one of his pockets, where he found a phial full of that drug;—Zeluco having ſecretly provided himſelf with it, ſoon after a converſation with Nerina, which has been already mentioned.—Whether he would ever have uſed it for the purpoſe to which ſhe meant to prompt him, can never be known, for the moſt profligate of mankind often ſhrink from executing the crimes which they have in ſpeculation.

The Surgeon adminiſtered a doſe of this medicine, which abated the pain, and gave him ſome hours reſt.

CHAP. XCVII.

What nothing earthly gives, or can deſtroy,
The ſoul's calm ſunſhine, and the heart-felt joy,
Is virtue's prize. POPE.

THE following morning early, Bertram, underſtanding that Zeluco was awake, entered his room to inquire how he was. Being then pretty eaſy and refreſhed by ſleep, he begged that Bertram would ſit by his bed-ſide; and as the ſtory of Antonio had made ſome impreſſion on him, he began to make more inquiry concerning him; after a few queſtions he ſaid to Bertram, "On the whole, I perceive that this Savoyard has put you to a conſiderable deal of expence, as well as trouble."

"I have already been amply repaid," ſaid Bertram; "but I ſtill expect an additional recompence."

"I underſtood the fellow *had nothing*," ſaid Zeluco.

"He has both a father and a mother," replied Bertram, "very honeſt people, as I have been told; they live at Chamberry, which is in my way home to Geneva; the poor old couple have been miſerable on account of their ſon's misfortune. I ſhall have the pleaſure of reſtoring him to them; —only think, Signor, what ſatisfaction I ſhall have—their old hearts will be ready to burſt with joy.—I often anticipate in my imagination, the ſcene of their firſt meeting;—why, Signor, a ſingle ſcene of that kind is worth all the five acts of dull ſelfiſh life."

"You enter into theſe people's happineſs as if it were your own," ſaid Zeluco.

"A great part of it will be my own," ſaid Bertram; "I queſtion if any of the three will be much happier than myſelf. You muſt have often felt, Signor, what a pleaſing ſenſation being the author of happineſs conveys to the heart."

Zeluco

Zeluco ſeemed diſtreſſed, and made no reply.

"I fear your wound gives you pain," ſaid Bertram.

"Not at all," ſaid Zeluco; "and this is the only recompence you expect?"

"It is all I would accept of from man," replied Bertram; "the conſciouſneſs of a good action is delightful when performed, and is alſo a ſource of pleaſing recollection through life. Would to God I had more of them to boaſt of! being conſcious of but few, makes me perhaps too vain of this."

"You have reaſon to be vain indeed," ſaid Zeluco.

"I am certain at leaſt," rejoined Bertram, "that I ſhould have been lower in my own eyes had I acted otherwiſe:—yet I make no doubt but you, and many others, would have done the ſame thing with leſs heſitation than I ſhewed."

Zeluco groaned.

"I am

"I am heartily ſorry to ſee you in ſo much pain," ſaid Bertram; "ſhall I call the Surgeon?"

"No, no," cried Zeluco; "the Surgeon cannot relieve me."

"I fear talking does you harm; I'll leave——"

"Pray ſtay," ſaid Zeluco; "I ſhall be worſe when you go.—Tell me, my friend, what fortune have you?"

Bertram named a very moderate ſum.

"And with this you are happy!" exclaimed Zeluco.

"With this I am contented," replied Bertram; "and I am happy in many other particulars;—riches cannot give happineſs."

"I'll be ſworn they cannot," ſaid Zeluco; "yet I am ſurpriſed that you, who have been abroad in the world, and have ſeen extenſive ſcenes of life, could be contented with ſo little."

"Perhaps," replied Bertram, "the circumſtance you mention has contributed to

it; for, limited as my circumſtances always were, I ſaw multitudes of my fellow creatures, in every country where I have been, much poorer than myſelf; but what had more influence than any thing in keeping me from diſcontent, was the remembrance of a maxim often repeated to me by my excellent father."

"What is that maxim?" ſaid Zeluco.

"When you are diſpoſed to be vain of your mental acquirements, Bertram," ſaid he, "look up to thoſe who are more accompliſhed than yourſelf, that you may be fired with emulation. But when you feel diſſatisfied with your circumſtances, look down on thoſe beneath you, that you may learn contentment."

"But even of the ſmall pittance you mention," ſaid Zeluco, "you allowed a conſiderable portion to your father."

"For that I can claim no merit," ſaid Bertram; "it is only a proof that I am not a monſter.—Ingratitude to a parent is the height of profligacy, including almoſt every kind of wickedneſs."

Zeluco ſtarted as if he had been ſtung by a ſerpent; the recollection of his own behaviour to his mother ruſhed on his mind with all the bitterneſs of remorſe.

"I really am grieved, Signor," ſaid Bertram, in a ſympathiſing tone of voice, "to ſee you ſuffer ſo much."

"I do indeed ſuffer," ſaid Zeluco, after a long and painful pauſe.

"I am ſincerely ſorry for it," reſumed Bertram; "I wiſh I knew what would give you relief;—but the medical people will be here ſoon;—they perhaps——"

"No, no," interrupted Zeluco, "they cannot relieve me."

"I hope, my good Sir," continued Bertram, taking him by the hand, "that after the next dreſſing your wound will become eaſier."

"My wound *is* eaſier," ſaid Zeluco with a voice of anguiſh; "but I have deeper wounds which their ſkill cannot reach."

"Alas!" ſaid Bertram; "ſome mental affliction; the loſs of ſome dear friend perhaps, cut off by a ſimilar but more fatal

fatal accident than what has now befallen you.—Have patience, my good Sir," continued he, "reflection, and the ſoothing hand of time——"

"I tell you," interrupted Zeluco, in the accent of deſpair, "that I never had a friend; that time developes freſh ſources of ſorrow to me; and reflection drives me to madneſs."

Bertram, being greatly ſhocked, made no reply; and Zeluco, after a conſiderable interval, having recollected himſelf, ſaid, with apparent compoſure, "I have been feveriſh and reſtleſs; I know not what I ſay; but the pain ſeems now to abate, and I feel myſelf drowſy. Pray, my good friend, leave me;—perhaps I may get a little ſleep before the Surgeon arrives."

When Zeluco found himſelf alone—"Happy man!" ſaid he, with a deep ſigh, "who can look back with pleaſure and ſelf-approbation, and forward with tranquillity and hope.—What falſe eſtimates are formed by mankind! This Bertram they will conſider

ſider as an unfortunate man, yet he has never been unhappy, and has found many ſources of enjoyment unknown to me. I have been reckoned remarkably fortunate, although I hav- never known what happineſs is. His life has been devoted to duty, and mine to enjoyment; yet it is evident he has had more enjoyment in his purſuit than I ever had in mine; I begin to think that pleaſure is moſt frequently found while we are on ſome more worthy purſuit, and miſſed by thoſe who are in ſearch of nothing elſe. O fool! fool! to ſacrifice the permanent rewards of virtue, without enjoying the only allurement of vice. After having paſſed my life hitherto in diſquietude, I am now ſtretched on a bed of danger, without a friend, or one perſon I can truſt, except this ſtranger, Bertram, on whom I have no claim but that of humanity and benevolence, which I myſelf have ſo little practiſed."

After theſe general reflexions on his paſt conduct, when he turned his thoughts to Laura, all his former cauſes of ſuſpicion

appeared

appeared in their native weakneſs; for anguiſh, languor, and humbled pride, preſented her conduct in a more candid point of view, untinged by the medium of jealouſy, and ſtripped of the gloſſes of Nerina. "Ah, that perfidious and accurſed woman!" exclaimed he, endeavouring to relieve the anguiſh of his own conſcience, by throwing the greater part of the guilt upon another; "I ſhould never have behaved as I did to the moſt virtuous of women had I not been inſtigated by a dæmon."

In reflexions of this kind, and in reſolutions of altering his ſyſtem of life, Zeluco paſſed the time till the Surgeon arrived to dreſs his wound. Upon this ſecond examination, the Surgeon was confirmed in the opinion he had formed at the firſt, that the wound was mortal; he thought proper to tell Zeluco, however, that it looked as well as he expected, and added other expreſſions of an encouraging nature.

When he returned to the parlour, he found Carloſtein with Bertram, and immediately after Father Mulo alſo arrived.

The

The Surgeon then fairly told them, that although he had ſaid nothing to his patient which would depreſs his ſpirits, yet he now had little or no hopes of his recovery.

"If that is your real opinion," ſaid Father Mulo, "why did you not inform the unhappy gentleman of the danger he is in?"

"Becauſe it is my buſineſs, Father," replied the Surgeon, "to cure him, if it is poſſible, and not to diminiſh the very ſmall chance of his recovery by diſagreeable news."

"You acted otherwiſe when you attended him formerly," replied Father Mulo; "for you then made him believe he was in more danger than was really the caſe."

"That is a remark, my reverend Father," ſaid the Surgeon, "which I hardly could have expected from you; yet you are too learned in your profeſſion not to know the *uſe of terror* in rendering mankind obedient. At the time you allude to, it was expedient to give this gentleman a ſtrong

idea

idea of his danger, that he might ſubmit to the regimen neceſſary for his cure; but at preſent it would diſquiet him without being of any manner of uſe.

"Why, Sir," rejoined the Monk, "it may be of the greateſt uſe."

"In my humble opinion," ſaid the Surgeon, "it cannot be of the leaſt, as I dare ſay thoſe gentlemen will acknowledge when I declare, I do not think it poſſible he can live above two, or at moſt three days."

"Jeſus Maria!" cried the Father, turning up his eyes; "why, for that very reaſon, Sir, it is your indiſpenſable duty, on ſuch an occaſion, to tell him the truth."

"There is no cauſe for being in a heat, Father," ſaid the Surgeon, bowing; "but I cannot think it conſiſtent with *politeneſs* to tell a gentleman a diſagreeable and unneceſſary truth on *any* occaſion.—I will refer it to this gentleman," continued he, addreſſing himſelf to Carloſtein, who he knew had been at Paris, "whether in France

ſuch a thing would not be conſidered as quite unpardonable?"

"How it would be conſidered in France is very little to the purpoſe," ſaid Father Mulo; "the important point is, how it will be conſidered in the other world, where the manner of thinking is very different from what it is in France."

"That is ſaying a ſeverer thing of the other world, than I ſhould have expected from a man of your cloth," ſaid the Surgeon.

"Will you, or will you not go directly and acquaint your patient of his danger?" ſaid Father Mulo.

"You cannot poſſibly imagine, my good Father," replied the Surgeon, "that I will behave ſo *unpolitely* to a gentleman, eſpecially when he is on the point of leaving the world."

"Why, Sir," rejoined the Father warmly, "by concealing his danger from him he may die without confeſſion, and his ſoul of courſe will be loſt for ever."

" As for his ſoul, and whether it ſhall be loſt or ſaved, that is his affair, or your's if you pleaſe, my good Father; but it is mine not to deviate from the laws of *good-breeding* and *politeneſs*." So ſaying, with a low bow to the company, he ſtepped into his carriage, and drove to Naples.

CHAP. XCVIII.

Thou canſt enter the dark cell
Where the vulture Conſcience ſlumbers,
And unarm'd by charming ſpell,
Or magic numbers,
Canſt rouſe her from her formidable ſleep,
And bid her dart her raging talons deep.

MASON.

ON his departure, Father Mulo ſhewed great impatience to be introduced into Zeluco's bed-chamber, and to acquaint him with the dangerous ſtate he was in, that every ceremony requiſite for his ſalvation might be performed without loſs of time. Captain Seidlits and Bertram being Proteſtants, and thinking that the intended ceremony of confeſſion would not do ſo much good as the Monk's abrupt manner of communicating the immediate neceſſity of it would do harm, endeavoured to perſuade him to defer it a little, as Zeluco ſeemed diſpoſed to ſleep when the Surgeon left

left him. While they diſputed the point the Phyſician arrived; he had met with the Surgeon, who had informed him that there was now a certainty of the bowels being pierced in ſuch a manner as to leave very little or no hopes of the patient's recovery.

It was the opinion of all preſent, that this information would come with more propriety from him than from Father Mulo: out of tenderneſs to the unhappy man, therefore, he was deſired to convey it.

With whatever delicacy the annunciation was made by the Phyſician, it ſeemed greatly to ſhock the patient, for till that moment he had little doubt of his ſurviving. He immediately renewed all his curſes and imprecations againſt Nerina with ſuch violence, that the Phyſician thought proper to withdraw. What repelled the Doctor, attracted the Monk. Father Mulo entered, and began an exhortation which had by no means the ſame ſoporific effect on Zeluco with the former, of which we have made mention, but ſeemed on the

contrary to throw him almoſt into convulſions. "You ſee, my worthy Father," ſaid Bertram, "that he is in too much pain to liſten to your admonitions at preſent; you had beſt leave him a little, and perhaps, after he has recovered the ſhock he has juſt received, he will be able to profit by your kind intentions."

After Father Mulo had been with difficulty removed, Zeluco deſired to ſee the Phyſician again, of whom he inquired once more if there abſolutely was no hope of his recovery. The Phyſician expreſſed much uneaſineſs at being obliged to confirm the opinion which he had already given; adding, that, although the wound, from the different functions of the parts injured, was not ſo *immediately* mortal, yet he feared itwould prove as *certainly* ſo as if the poignard had pierced his heart. Zeluco then aſked, How long the Phyſician thought he could live? To which the other anſwered, There was reaſon to believe he could not ſuffer above two or three days longer.

Zeluco

Zeluco made no anſwer, and continued ſeveral hours without ſpeaking a word to any body, but ſometimes muttered indiſtinct ſentences to himſelf, and ſhewed marks of impatience when any diſcourſe was addreſſed to him. He at length inquired whether Captain Seidlits had been to call for him, and expreſſed a deſire of ſeeing him. The Captain, who was juſt taking his horſe to go to Naples, immediately returned and was introduced to Zeluco's bed-chamber, every other perſon being requeſted to retire. Zeluco then addreſſed him to the following effect:

"Amidſt many ſources of regret, none affects me ſo ſenſibly, Sir, as my behaviour to your ſiſter. Prompted by headſtrong paſſion, I uſed every means I could deviſe, ſome of them not juſtifiable, to prevail on her to conſent to a marriage to which I plainly ſaw ſhe had a rooted diſlike. When by the continuation of my artifices, and the perſuaſion of her mother, ſhe gave a reluctant conſent, it might have been expected

that, happy in the attainment of my wiſhes, I ſhould have behaved with kindneſs and affection to her, however difficult it was for her to behave in the ſame manner towards me. The fact was otherwiſe: had *I* conducted myſelf with half the good nature to the wife I really eſteemed, and even admired, that *ſhe* did to the huſband ſhe diſliked, I ſhould not feel the remorſe I now do. On recalling to my memory the whole of her conduct, I cannot charge her with a ſingle impropriety; but in ſpite of her moſt blameleſs conduct, I plainly ſaw ſhe did not love me; every duty of a wife which was in her power, ſhe fulfilled; her affection it was impoſſible for her to place upon me, and this I had the injuſtice to conſider as an injury. I indulged groundleſs ſuſpicions, which were cheriſhed, and new ones of the moſt profligate nature were ſuggeſted by a devil in the ſhape of a woman, who, by the wickedeſt artifices, entangled my affections, ſtimulated my paſſions into madneſs, and was the cauſe of

even

even involuntary crimes. I earneſtly hope ſhe will be brought to the puniſhment her guilt and perfidy deſerve. I earneſtly hope —but let me drive her from my thoughts, —let no more time be loſt, but let me at length make all the expiation in my power.

" I was willing that you ſhould know, Sir, that theſe were my ſentiments, which at a proper time you will communicate to the moſt virtuous and deſerving of women."

Seidlits was affected. The wretched condition to which he ſaw the man reduced, had long ſince diſſipated all his animoſity; with a ſympathiſing accent which was not very uſual to him, and a ſincerity which never forſook him, he expreſſed wiſhes for his recovery. Zeluco ſhook his head as if he thought that entirely out of the queſtion, and Seidlits withdrew.

Zeluco then directed Bertram to ſend to Naples for his lawyer, who arrived in a ſhort time, and received orders regarding

his laſt will, which was executed in due form, and ſigned by Zeluco the following morning, in the preſence of certain perſons who came from Naples at his requeſt for that purpoſe.

CHAP. XCIX.

Hail piety! triumphant goodneſs, hail!
Hail, O prevailing, ever O prevail!
At thine entreaty, juſtice leaves to frown,
And wrath appeaſing lays the thunder down;
The tender heart of yearning mercy burns.

PARNELL.

THE following day Laura was informed for the firſt time of her huſband's being wounded, and that he was thought to be in danger. She was much more ſhocked at the intelligence than Signora Sporza, who communicated it, thought ſhe had reaſon to be. Signora Sporza proceeded to inform her of the particulars,—on what occaſion the accident had happened, and at what place her huſband was then lying. Thoſe circumſtances made no alteration in the feelings of Laura. "May Heaven in mercy," cried ſhe, "prolong his life

life till he is better prepared for death! O how dreadful for him to be hurried into eternity now!" Signora Sporza inſinuated ſomething regarding the wretched proſpect which Laura would have before her with ſuch a huſband, in caſe of his recovery. "Ah!" cried Laura, "is my temporal wretchedneſs to be put in the ſcale againſt his eternal miſery? Almighty God, have compaſſion upon him!" exclaimed ſhe, leaving Signora Sporza, and retiring to her bed-chamber, where ſhe immediately fell upon her knees before a crucifix, and, every ſelfiſh conſideration being annihilated in her breaſt, with all the ſincerity of the moſt ſublime piety, ſhe poured forth her prayers to the Fountain of Mercy, that the life of her huſband might be preſerved, and that Heaven might inſpire him with repentance, and extend mercy to him.

Returning to the room where her mother now was with Signora Sporza, ſhe inquired for her brother, and was told he had gone early the ſame morning to ſee Zeluco.—"Has my brother ſent no meſſage ſince?" ſaid

ſaid Laura. Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza looked at each other as if they heſitated what anſwer they ſhould give. "I perceive you *have* heard from him," cried Laura. "Pray tell me how it is with the unfortunate man? Alas, I fear he is worſe."

"It is ſurpriſing," ſaid Signora Sporza, "that you ſhew ſo much concern for one, who, had this not happened, might have been the cauſe of your brother's, or your friend Carloſtein's, death."

"Heaven be praiſed, they are both alive, and well," cried Laura, "whereas this unhappy man is——Ah, tell me how he is? What account have you received from my brother?"—"The account is not favourable, my dear," ſaid Madame de Seidlits. "Alas, he is gone," cried Laura. "Merciful Heaven! has he been hurried off ſo ſuddenly?"—"Shew her the Captain's letter," ſaid Madame de Seidlits. Signora Sporza then gave Laura a letter which ſhe had received from Captain Seidlits a little before ſhe informed Laura of what had befallen

fallen her huſband, but which ſhe abſtained from ſhewing her upon ſeeing her ſo much affected. The letter was in the following words:

"DEAR MADAM,

"THE ſurgeons in the preſence of the phyſician have juſt examined the wound; their opinions are the ſame as before, notwithſtanding ſome of the attendants had begun to entertain hopes of a favourable turn, on account of his being a great deal eaſier for theſe two hours than he has ever been ſince he received the wound; he ſeems very weak and languid; he ſometimes mentions my ſiſter, and once inquired if ſhe was in the houſe, but in a manner as if he wiſhed, rather than expected, it: on being told ſhe was not—"How could I imagine ſhe would?" ſaid he. "Why ſhould ſhe think of a wretch like me?" I own I am affected at the diſmal condition of this poor man. Yet it were highly improper that Laura ſhould ſee him; it would be diſagreeable to her, and might have very bad

effects

effects on her health; I imagine it would be right, however, to let her know in general what has happened, and the danger in which he is. You will conſult with Madame de Seidlits on this ſubject. I ſhall probably not leave this place till the evening.

"I am, &c. &c."

"I *will* go and ſee him," cried Laura, as ſoon as ſhe had peruſed the letter. Madame de Seidlits and Signora Sporza endeavouring to diſſuade her—"I conjure you, my dear mother," ſaid ſhe, "as you value the future peace of my mind, do not oppoſe me. My ſincere ſympathy may comfort him in this ſad hour of——. Pray do not oppoſe my inclination. Indeed, I muſt go." Fearing that ſtronger oppoſition might have worſe conſequences than the interview they dreaded, the carriage was ordered, and Laura, with her mother, immediately proceeded to the houſe in which Zeluco lay.

Laura paſſed the whole time in which they were on the road, in ejaculations and fervent prayers to Heaven, to look with an eye of mercy and compaſſion on her wretched huſband.

When they arrived, Captain Seidlits came to the door of the carriage,—"O brother, how is he?" cried Laura. Seidlits ſhook his head, and was ſilent. "Ah, miſerable man," exclaimed ſhe, "he is gone!"—"It is but a few minutes," ſaid Seidlits, "ſince he breathed his laſt."—"All merciful God, have compaſſion on his ſoul!" cried Laura.

Madame de Seidlits then ordered the coach to return with them to Naples. Laura paſſed the interval of her return in the ſame manner ſhe had done when going: and being arrived at Naples, ſhe entreated her mother, inſtead of driving directly home, to ſtop at the church in which they uſually heard maſs; and there kneeling before the altar, ſhe ſpent ſome time in mental prayer for the ſoul of her huſband.

After

After which, ſhe ſent for the prieſt, and directed that a certain number of maſſes might be performed for the ſame pious purpoſe.

Any perſon, ignorant of the real caſe, would naturally have imagined that Laura had been the happieſt of women in her marriage; for no woman deprived ſuddenly of the huſband of her heart, was ever touched with more ſincere anguiſh for her own misfortune, than the compaſſionate and benevolent breaſt of Laura was with generous ſolicitude for the eternal welfare of the huſband who had uſed her ſo ill, and whom ſhe had during his life deteſted.

When the laſt will of Zeluco came to be examined, which it was ſoon after his death, in the preſence of two of the magiſtrates of Naples, of Captain Seidlits, Bertram, and others, it appeared that he had left his paternal eſtate in Sicily to a diſtant relation, who was his natural heir; and the reſt of his fortune, which was of much greater value, to his widow, burdened with a few legacies, of which the principal was one of

two thouſand piſtoles to Bertram, and another of one thouſand to Captain Seidlits.

The relation of Zeluco, to whom he left the eſtate, had always been neglected by him, and had not the leaſt expectation of the good fortune which now befel him. On his arrival at Naples, Laura, having heard him ſpoken of as a man of worth, and that he had a family of children, made a conſiderable preſent in ready money to each of his children. She deſired this gentleman alſo to give her a liſt of ſuch of her huſband's relations as were in bad circumſtances; ſhe had often made the ſame requeſt to Zeluco with a view to aſſiſt them, but he had always evaded it, and ſhewed ſo much ill humour every time ſhe made the requeſt, that ſhe never had been able to put her good intentions towards thoſe people in execution. The legacy to Bertram was immediately paid, to which Laura made a conſiderable addition, and he ſoon after ſet out with Antonio for Geneva, eſteemed and loved by all who had known him.

Laura

Laura alſo uſed her intereſt to have Nerina treated with lenity while ſhe was detained in confinement; and as it was clear that ſhe was not directly acceſſary to the murder of Zeluco, ſhe uſed her influence to ſoften the minds of the judges, who were violently prejudiced againſt Nerinn, ſo that ſhe was at laſt liberated, and immediately after left Naples.

CHAP. C.

The Concluſion.

CAPTAIN Seidlits's leave of abſence was now nearly expired; he had often expreſſed his wiſhes that Madame de Seidlits and Laura would return to Germany with him; and urged, among other reaſons, that it was expedient for his ſiſter's health, and the tranquillity of her mind, that ſhe were removed from a place where ſo many objects would awaken painful recollections; aſſerting at the ſame time, that his mother-in-law and ſiſter would now live much more happily in Germany than at Naples.

Signora Sporza had mentioned to Captain Seidlits her opinion that Carloſtein was enamoured of his ſiſter; but from a delicacy natural to the ſex, ſhe gave no hint concerning what ſhe was as fully per-

ſuaded of, namely, Laura's partiality for him. Seidlits readily believed what he wiſhed to be true, and the high idea he had of his friend, left him no doubt that their love was mutual.

Although Signora Sporza had communicated only one half of her opinion on this ſubject to the Captain, ſhe unfolded the whole to Madame de Seidlits, who embraced the idea with great ſatisfaction; and the propoſal of returning to Berlin became more agreeable to her from that moment.

It is probable that Laura reliſhed the plan of ultimately ſettling in Germany full as much as her mother; but ſhe was ſolicitous to ſee certain diſtant relations of Zeluco eſtabliſhed in a manner which ſhe had pointed out, and in which ſhe wiſhed to aſſiſt them; the arrangements ſhe had made for this purpoſe could not be effectual without her preſence; nor could they be properly finiſhed in the ſhort interval that remained before her brother would be under the neceſſity of leaving Naples.

In the mean time Carloſtein received a letter from the Pruſſian Miniſter at Berlin, acquainting him that he was nominated by the king to an office at Court which had juſt become vacant; and hinting that he would pay his court in a manner very acceptable to his Majeſty, by returning immediately with his friend Seidlits, without waiting for the expiration of his own leave of abſence.

The pleaſure which Carloſtein would have felt from the knowledge of this mark of his ſovereign's favour, did not prevent the hint with which it was accompanied from diſtreſſing him greatly. His paſſion for Laura, and his admiration of her conduct, were higher now than ever; and ſhe continued to behave to him with every proper mark of confidence and eſteem. But he plainly perceived that the death of Zeluco, and the circumſtances attending it, had made a ſtrong impreſſion upon her, and had put her into a frame of mind which ill accorded with the ſubject that engroſſed

engroſſed his. He therefore abſtained from any direct declaration of his ſentiments to her, and it is probable would not have ventured on any thing of that nature ſo ſoon, had it not been for this letter from Berlin; but he could not think of leaving Naples in the ſame undecided ſtate, with regard to what he conſidered as the moſt important object of his life.

Without mentioning the contents of the Miniſter's letter even to his friend Seidlits therefore, he watched an opportunity of ſpeaking to Laura alone; and then in the warmeſt language of reſpectful love, he declared his admiration of her virtues, the ſincerity of his paſſion, and the ſupreme wiſh of his heart.

The whole of Carloſtein's conduct left no doubt of his ſincerity in the mind of Laura, yet ſhe ſhewed ſome ſurpriſe at the precipitancy of theſe declarations.—"I would have waited," continued Carloſtein, "for opportunities of giving ſtronger proofs than have hitherto been in my power of my attachment, before I had ventured to

mention the honour and happineſs to which I aſpire, had I not received intelligence by yeſterday's poſt, which fills my heart with ten thouſand diſquietudes."

"Intelligence!" cried Laura.

"Of the moſt cruel import," ſaid Carloſtein; "which threatens to tear me, when I leaſt expected, from all my ſoul holds dear."

"What do you mean?" interrupted ſhe, with an alarmed voice, and becoming inſtantly pale; "pray, explain yourſelf."

Carloſtein then gave her the Miniſter's letter, which ſhe took with an unſteady hand.

Having peruſed it, ſhe ſaid, "I ſee nothing here but good news; his Majeſty I find has done you the honour to appoint you to an office near his perſon."

Carloſtein pointed to the paſſage which hinted that the king expected him to return with Captain Seidlits, and renewing his addreſſes, declared, That his happineſs depended on her; that if he could flatter himſelf with the hope of her favour, he would

would immediately write to the Miniſter in ſuch terms as he had no doubt would procure him his Majeſty's approbation of his prolonging his ſtay at Naples; that no conſideration could prevail on——

Laura interrupted him, deſiring that he would not inſiſt on a ſubject which ſhe thought unbecoming her, as ſhe was then ſituated, to liſten to, adding, That ſhe would not attempt to conceal the ſentiments of eſteem which ſhe had always felt for him; ſhe acknowledged that ſhe valued his good opinion and friendſhip above that of any other man; that with reſpect to the Miniſter's letter, ſhe believed that ſuch a hint as it contained, coming from a king or miniſter, was generally thought equivalent to a command; that he certainly could not conſider it in any other light, and muſt act accordingly; that, independent of the Miniſter's letter, ſhe imagined there were conſiderations which might determine him not to remain longer at Naples, and would oblige her not to receive his viſits after the departure of her brother.

Carloſtein ſeemed uneaſy, and remained for ſome time ſilent after this declaration; but recollecting himſelf, he ſaid, "Your brother, I believe, is not entirely without hopes that Madame de Seidlits may be perſuaded to leave this country, and return immediately with him to Germany."

"My mother is ſo good as to aſſure me," ſaid Laura, "that ſhe will never ſeparate herſelf from me, and certain affairs which I think indiſpenſable will detain me a long time after my brother's departure."

"A long time!" repeated Carloſtein, with an accent of ſorrow.

"I ſhall think it a long time," ſaid ſhe, with a ſmile and a look which conveyed happineſs to the heart of Carloſtein; "for I do aſſure you," added ſhe, "that there is nothing which I wiſh more ſincerely than to return to my native country."

Carloſtein, being now more aſſured in the hopes which he could not help indulging, did not venture to urge her farther; for however favourable to him her ſentiments might be, he plainly perceived that Laura

thought

thought it indelicate to admit of his addreſſes ſo ſoon after the death of her huſband.

Immediately after leaving her, he communicated the Miniſter's letter to his friend Seidlits, informing him at the ſame time that he would accompany him home.

The interval between this time and that of their departure was ſpent almoſt entirely with Madame de Seidlits, Signora Sporza, and Laura; Mr. N—— was very frequently of the parties, every individual of the ſociety having the higheſt eſteem for that gentleman.

Carloſtein earneſtly wiſhed to correſpond with Laura after he ſhould leave Naples. As ſhe ſtood at a window apart from the reſt of the company, he ſeized the occaſion, and ſolicited her permiſſion to write to her. Laura beckoned to her mother, who having joined them, ſhe ſaid, "The Baron, my dear Madam, propoſes to write to *us*, which I dare ſay will be very agreeable to you, and will prevent our having

ſo

ſo much reaſon to regret my brother's want of punctuality."

Madame de Seidlits, although ſhe was convinced that the propoſal was intended for Laura only, anſwered, That *they* ſhould be happy to hear from him as often as his leiſure permitted him to write.

The day immediately preceding the departure of Carloſtein and Seidlits was to this ſociety mournful, but not unhappy; the flow of the virtuous and tender affections of the heart, of benevolence, gratitude, friendſhip, and love, are never without enjoyment.

——— Who that bears
A human boſom, hath not often felt
How dear are all thoſe ties which bind our race
In gentleneſs together, and how ſweet
Their force, let Fortune's wayward hand the while
Be kind or cruel?—— AKENSIDE.

Targe and Buchanan ſupped together tête-à-tête the ſame evening; they felt a mutual regard for each other, a mutual ſorrow at the thought of ſeparating, and they mutually agreed that the beſt way of diſpoſing

diſpoſing of ſorrow is to waſh it away with wine.

When the night was far advanced, Buchanan roſe, ſhook his friend very cordially by the hand, ſaying, "As you are to be up ſo early in the morning, I will not keep you any longer from your bed. So, God bleſs you, my dear Duncan."

"Nay, God ſhall not bleſs me theſe three hours," ſaid Targe; "for as I am to riſe ſo early, I do not think it worth while to go to bed this night; ſo ſit you down on your ſeat, George, and let us have a freſh bottle without farther ceremony."

Buchanan, not being in a humour to diſpute a point of this kind, immediately complied, ſlapping Targe upon the ſhoulder, and ſinging the following line from an old Scottiſh ſong:

He's the king of good fellows, and *wale* * of auld men;

and never made another offer of taking leave, till he ſaw Targe ready to ſet out with his maſter and Carloſtein.

* Wale, or choice.

The

The latter wrote from the various towns of Italy and Germany in the courſe of their journey to Berlin, addreſſing his letters alternately to Madame de Seidlits and to Laura. Captain Seidlits, who was not in love, and hated letter-writing, was contented with occaſionally adding a poſtſcript of a few ſentences to Carloſtein's letters.

This correſpondence continued with equal regularity after their arrival at Berlin; and Carloſtein, who had repeatedly begged of Madame de Seidlits to let him know the exact time when ſhe and Laura intended to leave Italy, at length wrote to her that he ſhould be happy to return to Naples, that he might have the honour of accompanying them to Berlin, and earneſtly intreated her to uſe her influence with Laura to conſent to that meaſure; for which, he ſaid, he was aſſured of the king's permiſſion.

Madame de Seidlits could not give a ſatisfactory anſwer for a conſiderable time, becauſe, although Laura herſelf was impatient to leave Naples, yet ſhe had reſolved

to remain till ſhe ſettled her affairs in ſuch a manner as not to require her returning: this ſhe accompliſhed at length, having at the ſame time gratified her own benevolent and generous diſpoſition by doing, what ſhe called, juſtice to the relations of Zeluco, in a degree far beyond their expectations; and ſo as to procure their fervent prayers for her happineſs, and the admiration of all who were acquainted with her behaviour.

At the approach of ſummer, Madame de Seidlits gave Carloſtein the joyful news that Laura and ſhe were immediately to ſet out on their return to Germany, and that they could not think of putting him to the inconveniency of coming ſo far as Naples, eſpecially as his friend Mr. N——, being to return at the ſame time to England, had offered to accompany them the whole way to Berlin; that they had agreed to accept of his eſcort, however, no farther than to Milan, which did not lead him out of the route that at all events he would have taken. At Milan, Madame de Seidlits added, ſhe had a friend who would accompany them

to Dreſden; and as they could not reach that city for a conſiderable time after the Pruſſian reviews were over, ſhe hoped it would not be inconvenient to Carloſtein to meet them there, at a time which ſhe mentioned, from whence he might accompany them to Berlin.

When Madame de Seidlits, Laura, and Signora Sporza, attended by Mr. N——, arrived at the inn at Milan, they were greatly ſurpriſed to find Carloſtein and Captain Seidlits ready to hand them out of the carriage. Seidlits had received his mother-in-law's letter during the reviews; his friend and he ſet out for Milan ſoon after, and arrived ſome time before the ladies.

The unexpected appearance of theſe two gentlemen certainly occaſioned an agreeable ſenſation to the company juſt arrived; but it was too ſtrong for the ſenſibility of Laura. She could not help being a good deal agitated, the conſciouſneſs of which increaſed her confuſion; every body obſerved the manner in which ſhe was affected, and all had the delicacy to impute it to the fatigue

of

of the journey. Laura ſoon recovered her uſual ſerenity, and the whole party ſpent a few very happy weeks at Milan; during which Mr. N—— received a letter from the Earl his father, informing him that Miſs Warren had conſented to give her hand to his friend Steele, to the infinite ſatisfaction of old Mr. Transfer and Mrs. Steele, as well as that of Lady Elizabeth and the Earl himſelf; and that the nuptial ceremony was delayed till Mr. N——'s arrival in England, all parties being deſirous that he ſhould be preſent on that happy occaſion.

This intelligence afforded much pleaſure to Mr. N——, who had great good-will toward Steele, a very high eſteem for Miſs Warren, and was beſides of a frame of mind which takes delight in the happineſs of others. With this charming diſpoſition Mr. N—— muſt have been highly gratified in the contemplation of the company he was then in, every individual of which was in a ſtate of felicity.

Signora Sporza, who loved Laura with an affection little inferior to that of her mother, could not conceal her joy in the

perſuaſion ſhe had of the approaching happineſs of her young friend; for it was now obvious that her marriage with Carloſtein would take place ſoon after their arrival at Berlin. Captain Seidlits was delighted with the idea of his beloved ſiſter's being united to the man whom of all mankind he loved and eſteemed the moſt. The ſatisfaction of Madame de Seidlits, it may be eaſily ſuppoſed, was equal to theirs. Laura and Carloſtein ſaw in each other all that their imaginations conceived as amiable; and they beheld in the faces of their ſurrounding friends a generous joy at the proſpect of their felicity, and an impatience to ſee them ſpeedily united.

It would have been difficult for Mr. N—— to have reſiſted the importunities of his friends and his own inclination, to accompany them to Berlin, had he not received the letter above mentioned from his father; this determined him to follow the plan he had formed on leaving Naples.

After expreſſing hopes of meeting again in Germany, or perhaps in England, Mr. N—— took a moſt affectionate leave of a

company he ſo greatly eſteemed, carrying with him the friendſhip and beſt wiſhes of every perſon in it. The ladies, eſcorted by Carloſtein and Captain Seidlits, ſet out for Berlin on the ſame day that Mr. N—— took his route for Geneva, where he propoſed to paſs a few days with Bertram, and endeavour, if poſſible, to prevail on him to accompany him to England.

On his arrival at Turin, where he ſtopped only one night, he wrote an anſwer to his father's letter, the concluſion of which was in the following terms:

"I AM every day more confirmed in the truth of what you, my dear Sir, took ſo much pains to impreſs early on my mind, That miſery is inſeparable from vice, and that the concurrence of every fortunate circumſtance cannot produce happineſs, or even tranquillity, independent of conſcious integrity.

"Had I harboured doubts on this head, the fate of a perſon with whom I had ſome acquaintance at Naples, would have ſerved to diſſipate them; the particulars of this wretched man's ſtory I will communicate

to

to you at more leiſure. I need only mention at preſent, that with every advantage of perſon, birth, and fortune, and united by marriage to the moſt beautiful and accompliſhed woman I ever had the happineſs of knowing, he was miſerable through the whole of his life, entirely owing to the ſelfiſhneſs and depravity of his heart. I am equally convinced that it is not in the power of external circumſtances to render that man, who is in poſſeſſion of integrity and the bleſſing of an applauding conſcience, ſo wretched as the perſon above alluded to often was in the midſt of proſperity and apparent happineſs. An acquaintance I lately formed with another perſon, a citizen of Geneva, of a character the reverſe of the former, and whom I am not without hopes of preſenting to you at my return, tends to confirm this opinion, and to convince me that the Poet is right in declaring,

"The broadeſt mirth unfeeling Folly wears,
"Leſs pleaſing far than Virtue's very tears."

THE END.



